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S. P. B. MAIS

THE UNKNOWN ISLAND

O divine
And beauteous island! Thou hast been my sole
And most magnificent temple, in the which
I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
Loving the God that made me.
—*S. T. Coleridge.*

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK :: LONDON
1933

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To JILL

with love

BEFORE you buy or even borrow this book, I should like you to be quite certain what it is all about.

It is not an exhaustive survey of England, Scotland and Wales. It merely describes seventeen haphazard excursions made at high speed at the request of the British Broadcasting Corporation for the purpose of stimulating in listeners a desire to explore and rediscover Britain.

My aim was emphatically not that of a guide through the country, but rather that of an introducer to it. If, after each of the talks, listeners did not want to rush off at once and explore the district through which I had just rushed, I had failed entirely in my purpose.

My object was merely to show that if a person of my sort with no special archæological, historical, architectural or geological knowledge, equipped with just the ordinary man's interest in legends and customs, could derive so much enjoyment from a series of lightning glimpses of casually selected parts of the country in mid-winter, you, who almost certainly possess deeper knowledge and wider interests than I have, could scarcely fail to derive much more enjoyment out of exploring more systematically the same areas at your leisure.

You may well wonder why I handicapped myself

by "lightning glimpses" and haphazard selections of country instead of taking my time and choosing areas whose beauties have already won recognition. The latter is easily answered. It is my very strong belief that almost every corner of this island is full of interest and beauty, and that it is proximity and accident that bring one area into prominence and leave another unvisited. I have no wish to paint the lily: Devon, Sussex, Kent, the Lake District and the Trossachs need no praise of mine. Their glories are sounded, and rightly so, on every side. What was most gratifying was the discovery that I was right, that in all these less well-known parts of the country there is a beauty as striking as in those more widely known.

The time-factor was, I grant, an unpleasant limitation, both in gathering information and communicating it.

Owing to the fact that during part of this series I was due to broadcast weekly talks on books to schools from London on Wednesdays at three o'clock, I was often unable to begin my exploration of the week until Thursday. My usual method of seeing a country is to rely on my feet and the local motor-bus services, but with only a couple of days at my disposal I could not afford the time for more than one short walk, usually a hill-climb, nor could I afford the time to wait for motor-buses. I was compelled, therefore, to hire a car, an expensive and (to me) a more or less distasteful way of exploring new ground.

I had, however, the good fortune to find informative drivers and reasonable garage proprietors. Usually I had only to pay 4*d.* or 4½*d.* a mile. I found it essential to

be back home in Sussex again by Saturday in order to give myself time to compress the mass of material I had gathered into a coherent order and into the limits required for a twenty minutes' discourse. This almost took longer than the tour itself, and in consequence I found myself in front of the microphone each Monday evening at 9.20 still revising, still eliminating, still dissatisfied.

Few things in my life (which has certainly been full of surprises) have more surprised me than the response elicited from correspondents by these unpretentious talks. I had more letters after my first talk than I have had in twenty years after writing forty books. Apparently no one writes to authors, and everybody writes to broadcasters.

For the most part these letters were appreciative, but any tendency that I might have had towards a swollen head by reading eulogies of this sort:

> *Shrewsbury.*
>
> Only too rare are the opportunities given to the B.B.C. victims to listen to one with the soul of a poet, the mind of a scholar, and the character of a gentleman

was quickly counteracted by reading an anonymous attack of this sort:

> *Scarborough.*
>
> To-night, Easter Monday, I switched on to Daventry at 9.35 to hear the B.B.C. orchestra as per time. You are gassing as I write at 9.43, you talking potato.

> Cannot you silly gas-bags realize that the vast majority of listeners expect programs to be carried out to time? Get back to your unfortunate village and on the Green there spout to your damned silly self till the cows come home.
>
> WELL-WISHER

I could scarcely explain to all those who wished me well in Scarborough that I was not due to stop till 9.40 anyway, that I started four minutes late, and that in consequence my allotted time was not up till 9.44; but what I did sincerely wish was that the sticklers for time should be condemned to condense into a twenty minutes' talk a description not of a whole country as I did, but just of Scarborough, say, that should be at once informative, accurate and entertaining enough to hold the attention of a few million listeners and make them want to go there themselves.

I learned a great deal from those who paid me the compliment of writing to me. It was a very special joy to realize that I was enabling numbers of the bedridden to feel that they had, for twenty minutes at any rate, been out of doors with me in the snow or the wind and the rain, and gone over well-remembered and much loved ground once more. It was gratifying to be praised even when I felt that I didn't deserve it. It was even fun being abused when I felt that I did deserve it.

The great majority, of course, both praised me and blamed me; praised me for going where I went; and blamed me for failing to go where I had no possible time to go. I have material enough for about a hundred further itineraries culled from these letters alone.

So helpful and often amusing were my correspondents' comments that I have made full and free use of them in this book. I have naturally concentrated on those that seek to correct me rather than those that merely flatter, though to me the flatterers were more useful while I was preparing the talks.

With the exception of these extracts I have thought it good to leave the talks exactly as I gave them. Indeed, I should never have thought of reprinting them had it not been for the great number of correspondents who asked me when they were to be published.

Many correspondents caviled at my using the term "Unknown" on the ground that every bit of country that I covered was well known to them. What perhaps I ought to have explained was that it was more or less unkown to me. I spend all my spare time traveling about this country, but nearly all these areas revealed some aspect of which I had been in ignorance before.

I was particularly grateful to the B.B.C. for laying down no rules for me. I just obeyed my whim, and zigzagged here and there like a snipe, purposely, so that no listener should be able to guess what part of the island I was going to explore next. This entailed a great deal of long-distance travel, but it was worth it to keep up the element of surprise.

A number of correspondents seemed to be mystified as to my real object, and attempted to pin me down to aims which never entered my head at all. Here is a typical post-card:—

"Your idea at first was to describe the country, and tell the British public details about quality of cook-

ing, hotel and other accommodation for 'would-be' visitors."

Nothing could have been further from my thoughts, for the simple reason that I am not a particularly good guide to hotels. What I require is a dry bed, a warm fire, quick service, and a good breakfast. I selected my hotels from Bradshaw, and usually picked on a Station Hotel or a Trust House, both of which seem to provide adequately for my requirements. My midday meal consisted of bread and cheese and beer, and at night I don't much care what I eat. I am no lover of dinner, anyway. I hope I have made it clear that it is no use asking me whether the cooking is French or English.

One of those who recognized most quickly what I was doing was Mr. R. M. Freeman, whose Pepysian diary is one of the most refreshing features in the *Radio Times*. This is what our modern Pepys wrote after my first talk:—

"A thing that did please me mightily this night over the Wireless was Mr. Mais his discourse on 'The Unknown Island,' meaning Gt. Britain, that so few of us know as we shd do by the prevalent fashioun of taking our holidays to foreign parts, and reck naught of the abundant charms that lie to our hand at home. But now with 1^{l} still 1^{l} here, whereas across the water 'tis hardly 14^{s}, this is our chance to sample our own island's less familiar charms, and of some of these goes on to acquaint us, with more to follow in the future. As to which my wife says, This is all very well. But does not foreign travel enlarge the mind?

> Whereto I answered her, Perhaps; but not, in present condiciouns, so much as it shrinks the pocquet. Moreover, had it on the end of my tongue to remind her 'twas, in any case, *my* pocquet that wd have to shrink for the enlarging of *her* mind, so farr as it is capacious of any such thing; which I doubt."

That really was my object, to set a fashion to suit our depleted purses, to prove that England, Scotland and Wales are not only cheaper to stay in, but provide far more scenic beauty and general interest for the visitor than any other part of Europe. All that I remember of the hotels is that they were all reasonable in price, that the management and staff were usually both courteous and helpful, and that with two exceptions I was comfortable. In Carmarthen the service was dilatory; in Richmond I was badly gassed.

I relied for my information, where to go, and what to see and so on, on hotel-porters, booksellers, fellow-passengers in buses, bus-conductors, garage-proprietors, car-drivers, railway-porters and shop-assistants. This may explain why I missed a good deal that most people see, and saw a few things that the average tourist misses.

This method had the advantage of preventing me from dwelling too insistently on any one aspect of the countryside. My own inclination is always to make a bee-line for the church and public-house in every village. In the former I get a quick glimpse of its ancient, and in the latter a not so quick glimpse of its modern history. But during this tour I found myself visiting all kinds of industries and making friends with withy-peelers and chocolate-coverers. I had to ring as many

changes as possible, and my delight was great to find that these changes were almost unlimited.

Many guide books leave one with the impression that England is rich only in ecclesiastical architecture, while others rely entirely on descriptions of natural scenery for their appeal. The impression I gained was of a country quite startling in its diversities and quick changes. Those who assert that they prefer continental travel on the ground that they require on their holiday a complete change, strangeness, and a "foreign" atmosphere that they cannot get in England cannot surely ever have explored this island, for the atmosphere of Cornwall is as strange and foreign as that of Hamburg, and the atmosphere of the northern Highlands far more strange, far more "foreign" and far more alluring than that of the South of France. The people are as variable as the country they live in. They are alike only in courtesy.

In all the fifteen thousand miles that I covered in this tour I only encountered a lack of courtesy once, and that was from an old woman at a wayside railway station in Shropshire. And who knows what excuse she may have had for her momentary irritability? Kindness I encountered everywhere. Indeed we seem to be a singularly sweet-tempered race, when I compare this tour with any that I have taken in any other country. And sweet temper in the native adds materially to the sweetness of a holiday.

The best plan is to go to any one of the seventeen areas that I skim so lightly over here, and just wander about haphazard for a week or two in each of them. Long before you have exhausted their charm I shall have got another seventeen no less delectable areas ready for

you. For the great virtue of this still unknown island is that its riches have no end.

Indeed if you turn to the Index, compiled with so much care and accuracy by Mr. Geoffrey Higgens to whom I am deeply indebted, you will soon realize how infinite is the scope for the explorer in this country.

S. P. B. M.

Tansley,
Shoreham-by-Sea.

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Acknowledgments are due to the "Radio Times" for kind permission to reproduce the maps that follow each chapter.

The Unknown Island

1. HAWORTH

HAVE you ever played that game of making up lists of the great men and women of the past whom you would most like to have seen?

Some of them, Shakespeare for instance, you might meet anywhere. He is as likely to be found in an Eastcheap tavern as under a greenwood tree in the forest of Arden. But others haunt a certain restricted area. It is impossible to dissociate them from that area. Egdon Heath and Thomas Hardy, for example, are indissolubly united. So are Emily Brontë and Haworth Moor.

Now Emily Brontë is one of those great writers of the past whom I have long wished to have seen and known. My love for that solitary, passionate wanderer over the Yorkshire moors grows deeper every time I reread "Wuthering Heights." As I am myself a hillsman I can well understand her nostalgia, when away from home, for her own bleak, black, brooding hills. Only on the wind-swept heights did her rebellious, storm-tossed nature find that freedom and companionship for which her soul craved. A good many of us are like that. I think we are to be envied. In spite of my long enforced absences from them, I wouldn't be without my love of the hills for all the world.

Now the difficulty of meeting Emily Brontë, the best interpreter of the spirit of the Northern heights, is that she cannot come down to us. She is lost in the world of men. We have to climb to meet her. Until last week I had never done so. Partly I was afraid that the Haworth of reality could not possibly come up to the Haworth of my dreams. Partly I was afraid that the spirit of Emily might have been driven away by the spirit of industrialism. After all, Haworth is in the very center of the industrial north. My fears, like so many fears, were groundless.

Last Thursday, New Year's Eve, was a well-nigh perfect day. The sun was shining out of a deep blue sky on to a green world when I left Sussex. The sun was setting in a sky of palest turquoise above a world of white when I reached Yorkshire. I am not a Yorkshireman by birth, but I was at school there, and the sound of the Northern tongue, like the sound of clogs on the cobbles, never fails to rouse me like a trumpet. My heart glows with happiness whenever I hear a Yorkshireman talk. Instantly I feel as if after long exile I am come home.

The mills were all lit up on the road from Keighley as they were in my childhood. As dusk fell I looked up from the valley of chimneys and factories to a dimly-discerned hill-side covered with snow and dotted with lights. A black, irregular scar, crowned at the top with the four pinnacles of a church-tower, sprawled like a paleolithic monster in the snow from the railway-bottom up the hill.

That was my first view, by twilight, of the main street of Haworth, a street as narrow, as steep, and

quite as full of character as the main street of Clovelly in Devon. The house-doors open right on to the sets; on one side there is not even a pavement. At the top of this winding, shining, slippery, steep street, close to the churchyard gate, there hangs from an ancient, solid, foursquare, stone house, an inn-sign, bearing the name "Black Bull." It was to this inn that Branwell Brontë, in the intervals of painting well and writing badly, descended from the black rectory above, on the further side of the churchyard, to drink unwisely.

The "Black Bull" is a warm and comfortable inn of the kind that one associates with Doctor Johnson, full of thick-walled, low-ceilinged, paneled, spotless, cozy rooms with roaring fires, in front of which a man may fold his legs and have out his talk. One of these rooms is kept sacred to the memory of Branwell. The bell-pull that he so often helped to polish still hangs, and below it is a replica of his chair.

I was not looking for Branwell, but for his sister, so after a tea such as one only gets in Yorkshire, I went out into the frozen night. A group of red-cheeked, laughing mill-girls were getting out of a bus at the church-gates opposite a gayly-lit shop. A Christmas tree decorated with multicolored witch-balls stood in a cottage window. The flat tombstones in the churchyard were white with snow under black, bare, shining trees. Very soon the flickering street-lamps and stone cottages came to an end and the sound of clogs on the icy causeways faded into the distance.

I was on a white, frozen road with a deep dark valley on one side, and on the other rose a hill of steep stone-walled fields of snow surmounted by what looked in

the darkness like titanic crags. There was a side road leading up over the hill which I took. It was just a sheet of ice in the middle, but it was possible to get a foothold on the untrodden snow in the gutter. At the top of the rise there were many tracks leading on to the open moor, where there was some dismantled machinery looking rather like a gibbet in the uncertain light. I began to flounder over the heather and bracken and bilberry plants towards the gibbet, and reached it after sinking many times to my knees in the soft snow. I then made a bee-line for the crags beyond, which now seemed to be slag-heaps, but when I attempted to climb them I found them to be loose screes of what felt in the darkness like polished granite. I stood on these screes looking up into the milky way studded with a million stars, and then across two valleys to other hills where irregular lights also flickered. There was no sound in all the world.

A little way below at the bottom of a tiny lane and protected by a few gaunt trees I could just trace the outlines of a dark stone farm on the moor-side with one light showing. Surely Wuthering Heights must have looked just like that. I scrambled over the snowy heather towards it, and stood at the top of the lane, but no sound came from it, either of the shuffling of hens at roost, or of the breathing of cattle in the byre.[1] Not even a dog barked. But looking back on the moor I seemed to see the flying, black, gaunt figure of Heathcliff, and the white wraith of Catherine following. I had found Emily exactly where I had expected to find her, wandering on the open moor.

The whole night scene seemed alive with her pres-

ence. I could understand very well that story of the little boy with the sheep and two lambs, crying terribly because he had seen the ghosts of Heathcliff and Catherine "under t' nab," and dared not pass them. But the presence was much more than physical. I found myself filled with the wildest exhilaration as I stood there under the stars in the snow. For one glorious moment I felt the at-one-ness of man and the hills. Emily was, as usual, right. It was impossible to imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers under that quiet earth. These ghosts are not frightening; they do not need our pity; they have found what we seek. How long I stood there I do not know. It may have been seconds only. When I came to myself I was striding over the snow down the hill. I was certainly still in a semitrance when I got back to the frozen street.

I was recalled to the world of men by the sight of three small black shadows creeping from door to door. I stood still, listening and watching. First a knock, then a plaintive cry: "Doost 'a want anny mooners?" But no door opened. I stepped out of the shadows. "I want some mummers," I said. Three masked faces looked up into mine. They were dressed as Oriental potentates. I felt as if I had gone completely "fey." You remember the dirty, ragged, blacked-haired child Heathcliff, who came from nowhere and so seized upon Emily's imagination as to become more herself than she was. "Who knew but his father was Emperor of China and his mother an Indian Queen?" I seemed to be still walking in a world of ghosts. I was soon undeceived. I prepared to listen to some faëry ballad of the old Lob, or a Gondal poem of Emily. Instead,

three shrill voices rent the frozen stillness with "It ain' a-goin' to rain no mo'!" They seemed surprised when I interrupted them harshly. Again they murdered the silence with "I'm goin' to be gay" or "I'm not goin' to be gay"—I forget which.

As quickly as I could I left them, but a moment or so later was again arrested by a scene of quite peerless beauty, a small courtyard filled with snow, a place of clothes-lines with crooked posts and broken clothes-pegs, silhouetted against the snow, with dark mysterious slits of passages leading down into space. It was the perfect wood-cut come to life, a symphony in black and white. Again I was held spellbound, and this time the spell was not broken.

I walked on to the "Black Bull" in a more "fey" state than ever. I distressed my kind hostess who had cooked for me a dinner fit for a fling, by failing altogether to do justice to it. But I couldn't very well explain what had happened to me, because I didn't know.

Afterwards I wandered into the taproom and found a dozen or so more mummers, the men's faces hidden by masks, the girls' by thick, black veils. "We've coom to sweep out," said one of the veiled girls beckoning to me to come and sit by her side as if she had known me all her life. Such completely unself-conscious friendliness is almost heartbreaking to one who is little used to it. They all immediately burst out singing. They sang "My girl's a Yorkshire girl." They sang "On Ilkla Moor baht 'at." They sang a most lovely melody called "Rimington." [2] An old farmer in a battered hat rose from one corner and challenged an equally old farmer in an-

other corner to a song contest. Without waiting for his challenge to be accepted he sang three songs. Haworth's ancient reputation for singing was well upheld.

At half-past eleven I crossed the churchyard to the main door of the church. There was obviously a service on, but as I fumbled for the door-handle I heard out of the shadows an eerie cry, "Sst! Sst!" Why on earth anybody should choose to see the New Year in from the icy cold, inky black porch of Haworth church I cannot tell you. "Tha'lt find t'oother door oppen," said the unseen, and I crossed the churchyard to a side-entrance and found myself in a lofty, much-restored church. Emily was not in the church. There was a congregation of twelve. Considering our numbers we sang the three hymns well. After a short and helpful word or two on the need for courage, the rector came down the aisle to shake us by the hand and wish us a happy New Year. There were no unquiet Brontë spirits in the churchyard as I passed through on my way to the inn.

In the night the weather changed suddenly. A wind rose and beat wildly round the eaves. A soft rain swished across the window-panes. The frost had broken. The view from my window on New Year's Day was unpromising. The hills were hidden in mist and rain. Snow still lay like a framework of a picture under the black stone walls of the fields, but the house roofs were black and shining, and so were the flat tombstones in the churchyard. But the roads were still frozen and treacherous, and the wise driver still kept chains on the wheels of his car as we set off for Stanbury to call on and pick up that great Brontë enthusiast, Jonas Bradley,

who, with typical North country courtesy, had given up the whole day to show me round.

We drove on in the teeth of a westerly gale, which lashed the black waters of the tarns and reservoirs that we passed into angry waves. There was moorland on every side of us, but every few yards Mr. Bradley found some new point of interest, revealed some fresh, piquant anecdote. There was so much that I couldn't take in a quarter of it, but I am not likely to forget the bare, black, ancient farmstead standing solitary on the hillside in an all too thin veiling of tall trees, called Ponden Hall, the original of Emily's Thrushcross Grange. It is the perfect setting for these Earnshaws and Lintons.

There were a few horned sheep grazing in the pastures below the moor-edge, as black as the loose stone walls which penned them in. Occasionally, on the moor itself, I could see the ruins of an ancient cross, looking like a bent witch walking into the wind. There were fronds of brown dead bracken by the roadside, and brown, dead cotton-grass covered the moor. All else was black or white. Even the bilberry bushes and the ling looked black. We passed a lonely house bearing on its sign the "Friendly" Inn, and then, after crossing the county boundary into Lancashire, looked down upon a new world. Alas, the hilltops ahead, like those on our left and right, were shrouded in a whirling mist. We were to have no view of Pendle.

Eventually we drew up at a gray stone house standing solitary on the very top of the moor, the "Herder's" Inn. A good fire was burning in an inner, low-ceilinged room. Oatcakes were hanging along a string running under the beams with paper covers over them. The

landlord, an ascetic, with eyes of keen, clear light gray that seemed to look through you and beyond to far distances—accompanied by two dogs and a gun—turned the wireless off (they seem to have superb wireless sets in every north-country home) and began to tell us of his visit to Caldbeck to celebrate the centenary of John Peel. He seemed most impressed by the fact that hounds walked in and out among the horses' feet as though they loved them. His wife produced fatty cakes. They treated me as if I were a long-lost son.

A little way beyond the "Herder's" we passed through a cutting in the side of the hill. One severe winter the snow fell to such a depth that they had to dig a tunnel through this cutting under the snow. That gives you some idea of its bleak wildness. We got out of the car a little further on by the side of two weather-beaten, ancient, stone posts which opened on to a steep bridle-track dug deep into the fields below. It was hedged by tall, upright slabs of black stone. After slipping and sliding down for ten minutes we came to a muddy, brown, turbulent beck with twisted thorn trees growing on its banks, running in a narrow ravine through a lovely gray-back hamlet of the moors.

Mr. Bradley took me first into an ancient barn with five lofty oak pillars resting on Norman stone piers, and then led me past the ruined home of the Cunliffes, of which only the mullioned windows, stone fireplaces and roofless walls remain. This was the house made famous by Charlotte Brontë in "Jane Eyre," under the name of Ferndean Manor. Its real name is Wycollar.[8]

On the other side of the road stands an ancient, low, stone house with a magnificent old oak door, stubbed

with nails. The owners, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, welcomed me in as if they had been looking forward to my visit for weeks, stopping their work to offer me refreshments and to show me their many rare treasures of antique oak and polished brass.

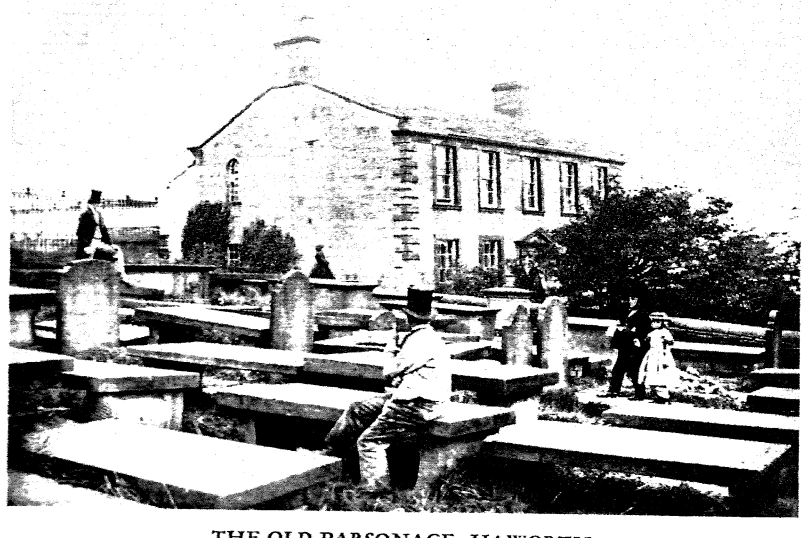
The beck runs under two bridges, one a footbridge of flat stone slabs, like the clapper bridges of Dartmoor, the other a more picturesque, very narrow, packhorse bridge with two high, irregular arches. This bridge was entirely covered with ice. It was in this gray jewel of a place with its seventeenth-century stone byres or *mistals* and barns and stout oak doors that "Shirley" and "Wuthering Heights" were filmed twelve years ago.

As we reclimbed out of this secluded dell I looked back, and there was Mrs. Smith waving to us from the doorway as if we were her own children going off to school. What a country!

We drove back towards Haworth, and turned over the moor to join the main road from Keighley to Hebden Bridge. This road rises to a height of nearly 1,500 feet as it winds over Oxenhope Moor, and the hedgeless way is marked by tall stoups or tall stones at intervals of forty or fifty yards, painted white almost to the top and black at the very top to guide travelers lost in the fog or the snow drifts. The whole moor was wrapped in mist, so that we could only see one stone ahead, but as we dropped down to Peckett Well, below the thousand foot level, we got a glimpse of a glorious wooded gorge far below leading up to Hardcastle Crags. Even on this forbidding day it was full of beauty. The mist turned to a steady, pitiless



FIELDHEAD OF "SHIRLEY"



THE OLD PARSONAGE, HAWORTH
(circa 1850)

downpour of rain, so I spent the afternoon, not in tramping blindly in the wind and wet over the melting snow to Withens, as I fully meant to do, but in a visit to the Rectory, now the Brontë museum. There are many haunting things in this house—the scribbled drawings on the walls in the tiny nursery where Emily slept, Emily's strange, crabbed writing in her diary, the baking-table where Emily kneaded the dough, with her eyes ever fixed on the book by her side; Emily's writing-desk, and the sofa on which she died. I saw no toys.

It is indeed a complete museum, but the thing I remember most about it is that every window looks out on to that black, dripping churchyard.

Yes—Haworth is a haunting place. It is not a place you will ever forget. Contact with the outer world has not in the least rubbed off that "fey" effect—I am still haunted. I seem to have brought away something of the moor spirit with me. You may not like it. Charlotte didn't. "The scenery of these hills," she said, "is not grand. It is not romantic. It is scarcely striking." To me the scenery *is* grand. To me it is more romantic than any other place I know. To me it is more than striking: it is awe-inspiring.

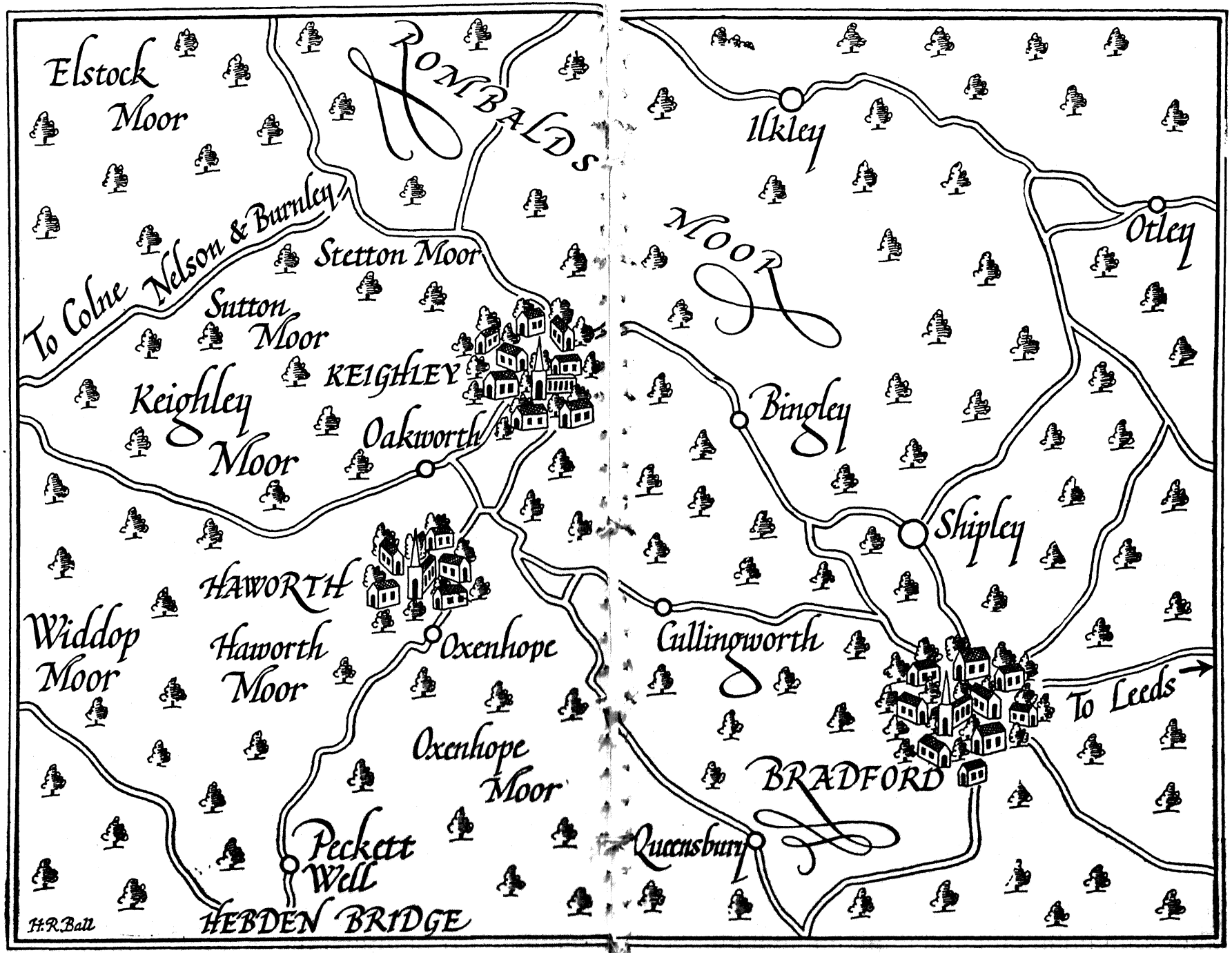
To avoid it merely on the grounds that it is near the great centers of industry shows a strange ignorance of these northern towns.

I may have made Haworth sound inaccessible. It isn't. It is quite close to Leeds, Bradford and Halifax on the one side, and to Colne, Nelson and Burnley on the other. It is a mistake to suppose that because these towns possess factory chimneys and are interested in manu-

facture, that they are either ugly or uninteresting. Each one is marked by a very strong individuality. Each has a peculiar beauty of its own. The inhabitants of these places are not colorless townsmen, but sprung from a sturdy stock of hill-country yeomen, intensely loyal in friendship, vigorous in action, cheerful in adversity, modest in prosperity, artistic, tender-hearted, and fundamentally humorous. They know and love their moors, but they are not in the least dog-in-the-mangery about them.

You needn't be afraid of overcrowding. These moors stretch for 150 miles from north to south, and thirty to forty miles from east to west. There is plenty of room for you to lose yourself, and almost every acre is steeped in mystery and romance.

When next, therefore, you go to Scotland don't imagine that you are wise to close your eyes as you pass through the smoke-laden north. Get out at Leeds, or, if you won't accept my dictum about smoke, at Harrogate, where the air is as clean and pure and sweet as it is in Switzerland, and let yourself loose on these hills. I have a very strong feeling that you'll never get to Scotland. Like a man I met the other day on the moor, I shall hear you in years to come say: "I came here for twenty-five minutes and I find that I've stayed for twenty-five years."


Elstock Moor
Rombalds Moor
To Colne
Nelson & Burnley
Stetton Moor
Sutton Moor
Keighley Moor
KEIGHLEY
Oakworth
Ilkley
Moor
Otley
Bingley
Shipley
HAWORTH
Widdop Moor
Haworth Moor
Oxenhope
Oxenhope Moor
Cullingworth
To Leeds
BRADFORD
Queensbury
Peckett Well
HEBDEN BRIDGE
H.R.Ball

2. *GLASTONBURY*

YOU know Camelot, of course. Every one knows Camelot. The trouble is that every one is so sure that his or her Camelot is the only right one.

Those who live in Monmouthshire know that theirs is the right one. Camelot is Caerleon-on-Usk, of course. Did not Caxton say so? Those who live in Winchester know that they live in Camelot. Isn't there Arthur's Round Table to prove it?

Again there is so much of King Arthur at Tintagel, Damelioc, and Killiwic, that I am not in the least surprised that all Cornishmen are convinced that the only true Camelot is at Camelford.

But there is something to be said for my Camelot too. And my Camelot is in Somerset. When I was a master at Sherborne, that ancient and lovely capital city of Wessex, where King Alfred was at school, I used to climb the hill northward out of Dorset on to the ridge that ended in Cadbury Rings, that most famous of all Somerset earth-works, where you may still see King Arthur's Palace, and King Arthur's Well, and look out over the forest-path known as King Arthur's Hunting-track that leads straight across the island valley of Avalon,[1] "deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns and bowery hollows crown'd with

summer sea," to the green knoll of Glastonbury Tor.

Round Cadbury Rings King Arthur and his knights still gallop on moonlight nights in midsummer on horses shod with silver shoes. But you needn't always wait for moonlight nights or midsummer. Often and often in broad daylight, as I've looked down from Camelot on Avalon, I've seen the gay pennons and shining lances of the Arthurian knights threading their way in and out among the distant trees, and often and often in those days I swore that I too would set out in quest of the Holy Grail and find it perhaps at Glastonbury. Every boy at some time in his life sees himself as Sir Galahad, just as every girl sees herself as Elaine, dying for love of Sir Lancelot.

But somehow I never got to Glastonbury. Years later I was whisked out of Bath by motor charabanc and shown the glories of the Mendips in what seemed a moment of time. I carried home a confused medley of impressions of subterranean halls of shining stalactite and stalagmite under the cliffs of Cheddar; of a cathedral at Wells with a clock out of which mechanical knights [2] appeared and had their heads chopped off; and of a hurried tea, and after that a tiny glimpse of the ruined abbey at Glastonbury. But Glastonbury is no place to whisk through at teatime in a charabanc. It is a place of pious pilgrimage, for it was here that St. Joseph of Arimathea landed with his eleven companions carrying, so the story runs, the Holy Chalice, that sacred cup out of which Our Lord drank at the Last Supper.

This St. Joseph hid under the Tor.[3] He planted his staff on Weary All Hill and it grew into the Holy Thorn which flowered every Christmas. It was here

that he built his little church of wattles, which afterwards harbored the great St. Patrick, who died there. It was here that King Ina signed a charter in 704 giving rights to the monks, that can still be seen.

This great Benedictine house, the last to fall as it had been the first to rise in England, could boast a succession of sixty abbots, among them St. Dunstan, before Henry VIII saw fit to demolish it. In this holy place are buried not only saints, St. David as well as St. Patrick and St. Joseph, but kings; King Edgar and King Edward here, and there, between Edmund the Magnificent and Edward Ironside, the great King Arthur himself with Guinevere by his side.

There are many, many reasons why you and I should go to Glastonbury—the Musical Festival, the attraction of a smiling countryside, architecture and archæology: but there is also this reason—here is the Holy Grail, here lies King Arthur.

I made a vow to go back to Glastonbury. I have now performed this vow. On my way an odd thing happened.

It was an extremely unpleasant night to be trudging, as I was, with a heavy bag through the streets of Bridgwater, for there was a high gale and much more rain than I liked. I was glad to reach the haven of the tiny terminus of the Somerset and Dorset railway.

Exactly as I got to the door of the waiting-room I heard a faint cry: "I'm going to die," and I saw a deathly pale, tall, gaunt woman fall forward in her chair. Three market-women threw down their parcels and ran forward to her rescue, a soldier dashed out of the room and returned with a cup of water, and I was

immediately regarded as a doctor because I produced a flask of brandy.

The woman's daughter, a small girl with big brown eyes, stood by the table clutching a doll, with a number of parcels at her feet. She looked almost numb with bewilderment and misery. I asked her where she was going. The wind was blowing so hard that it was with infinite difficulty that I could catch her whispered word. It sounded like "Warley." I went off to find the station-master. It wasn't Warley, but Wool. The woman had asked for a ticket to Wool but had confessed to having no money. The police, he told me, already knew about her.

"Not that she's collapsed," I said. "Tell them that."

He went off to telephone to them. When I got back they had carried the inert woman out of the hot waiting-room into the icy, wind-swept booking-hall. The child, petrified with fright, clung to the table, her doll and the parcels, and refused to leave them or the waiting-room. The gale, the water, or the brandy, or a combination of the three, at last restored the woman to partial consciousness. She was about as exhausted as anybody can be. Two farmers suddenly started a violent argument about her destination, "Why—Wool be in Darzet," said one, in the tones of a man talking about an island in the Pacific. We all hovered about vaguely, and kept on pestering the small child with absurd questions which she couldn't answer. Tears began to course slowly down her cheeks.

Suddenly it dawned on us that we had a train to catch. "We can't leave her like this," said one of the market-women, "but I've got to get home." "I'll see

to her," said the station-master. " 'Tis a doctor she wants. We got to be human."

Reassured by this we allowed ourselves to be shepherded into the train and sent on our way."

"Hadn't had nothin' to eat since Christmas," said one of the women, "pore soul." "Found 'er 'usband gorne—a deserter so they say," said another.

Fact and fancy chased each other across the railway compartment. I've no idea now what the truth of it all was, but I got in a panic later that in the excitement the child might be forgotten and stay in the waiting-room forever. The hospital authorities kindly assured me that they were harboring both mother and daughter.

An oddly Hardyesque story in Thomas Hardy's own country.

At Glastonbury I renewed my battle with the wind and rain, and was in no mood, when I arrived at the fifteenth-century "Pilgrim's" Inn, also called the "George," to admire the stone carvings or bay windows. All I wanted was a fire.

My bedroom, a lofty room with beams and plaster on the walls and beams and plaster on the ceiling, is known as the Abbot's Room and is haunted. As it was Twelfth Night I expected the Abbot to visit me, but I was visited neither by ghost nor sleep.

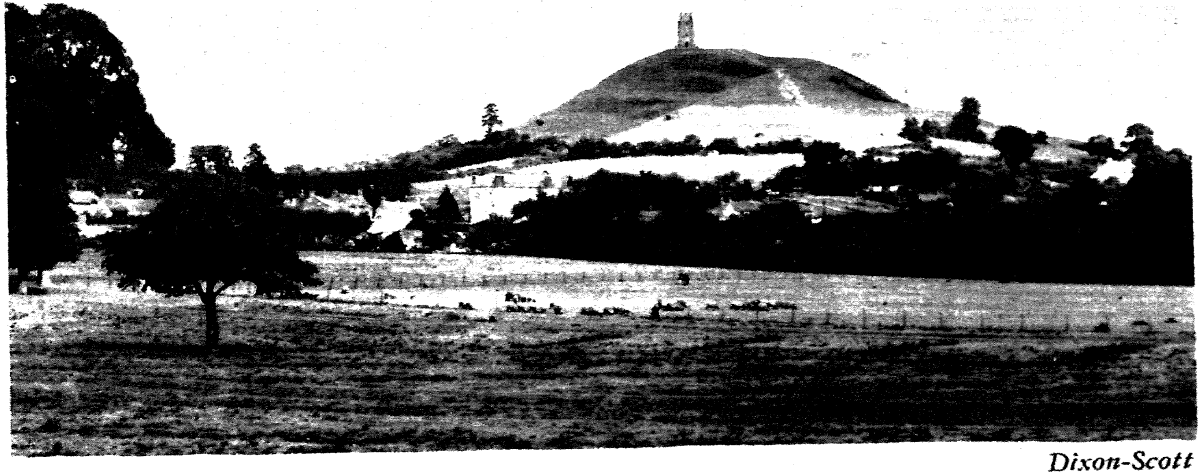
The next morning I went up to the churchyard to see the Holy Thorn which blooms at Christmas. I don't know why, but I had expected something insignficant, and found instead a stupendous thorn-bush in full panoply of green with red berries and white flowers. And this in spite of sad mutilation, for every visitor seems to demand a whole twig as a memento.

I left Glastonbury by way of Pontparles Bridge, over which Sir Bedivere threw Excalibur.

The country near Glastonbury changes with astonishing rapidity. Glastonbury is a palimpsest of red brick on haunts of immemorial antiquity set on the side of a green hill. Within a mile I was in Street, a place of gray stone modern houses and factories, where they make ladies' shoes. And just beyond that the country opens out into the kind that one always associates with Somerset; white-washed, yellow-washed, pink-washed cottages of thatch, soggy pastures with cattle standing in the mud, hedges with oaks and elms growing out of them, little hills dark with copse, apple-orchard after apple-orchard of small crinkly trees with trunks white limed, plow-land of deepest red, laborers in white smocks, and laborers in smocks not so white, lopping the hedges or taking calves to market. And then, just as suddenly, when the road descends from the Polden Hills at Greinton, there comes into view another change of landscape. Here, in front, lie the flat, brown marshes of the King's Sedgemoor.

The road, a very ancient one, known as Greylake Fosse, now becomes hedgeless, and is bounded by dykes (here called reens),[4] on the banks of which grow pollarded willows, their bare, thin, finger-like branches at this time of the year painted a vivid red, like the finger-nails of some of our odder young women.

Out of the flats rises here and there a lofty church tower. Beyond the village of Othery the scene changes again, more subtly. On one side of the road there is a raised bank on which, at intervals, stand small red-bricked houses above the flood-level. In the sloping



Dixon-Scott

TOR HILL, VALE OF AVALON



A. J. Fellows

GLASTONBURY ABBEY

gardens I saw piles of newly-peeled wands, rosy-fingered as the dawn, put out to dry after black-haired girls had stripped the bark off the withies by pulling them through two smooth, upright iron rods jammed very close together. On the other side of the road men with bill-hooks were cutting the dark withies in the marsh-beds.

Just at the junctions of the rivers Parrett and Tone is Burrow Bridge, where there is a small knoll, known as Alfred's Fort or the Mump, on the top of which is a ruined church. It is nothing of a climb, but it commands an extraordinarily wide view. In the distance, on all sides but one, are hills; the rounded, gorse-covered Quantocks looking like a bit of Exmoor gone astray; the far more austere, high, stone-wall table-land of the Mendips; nearer are all sorts of bluffs and knolls like islands and cliffs rising out of the sea, which is, of course, exactly what they formerly were; and nearer still and below lie the shining water-meadows of the Sedge and other moors, cut off into rectangles by endless dykes. There are 400 square miles of these dyke-divided sea-flats stretching beyond the Highbridge wireless station to the Bristol Channel.

But the most interesting bit of all lies just below, across a mile or so of withy beds, and that is the Isle of Athelney.[5] To reach it you turn down a narrow lane just before you get to Lyng. There is a moss-covered, raised bank on one side of the lane, a number of orchards in which pigs were rooting, a good many willows and then a cluster of red cottages on the river bank. A woman was stripping withies so neatly that I wanted to see for myself how easy it was. She gave

me a demonstration. First she put the thick end in the brake, gave a smart jerk, and then pulled the thin end through twice, and lo! the wand was clean. At least it was when *she* did it. But I spoilt twenty or more before I got one right. Her husband, leaning against the door-post, described the great flood of 1929, when he and his family had to be rescued in boats out of their bedroom windows. Every one I met talked to me of the Great Flood as if it were yesterday.

I crossed the field to the farm under the hill, to see Alfred's monument. A small boy left off feeding pigs in the yard to direct me by the cleanest path. First I climbed under barbed wire, then flattened myself between a hayrick and a wall, then passed through the cowshed, across the pig-yard, and so ultimately came through a barn into a field. His smaller brother then took me in charge, and led me to the obelisk which describes how Alfred, as a thank-offering for his victory over the Danes at Ethandune, founded a monastery here. The boy then offered to show me the exact spot where Alfred burnt the cakes, led me right into the farm to a white-washed scullery and pointed to one corner with the assurance of a cathedral guide. His mother appeared from behind, and smiling, said that she was less certain. "After all, it was hundreds and thousands of years ago," she said; "it may have been in another part of the house." That seemed more reasonable, but I liked the little boy's certainty better.

I crossed the bridge over the Tone past a withy-boiling shed and called in at the "King's Head," the landlord of which produced a four-year-old grandchild who was munching bread and drinking cider out

of a mug. During the flood this child disappeared completely in a submerged withy-bed and when rescued appeared to have ingurgitated most of it. In the taproom I met an ancient, whiskered, withy-bed owner who sang a song about pirates, notably about one Charles Brennan.[6]

The landlord not only sells cider. He brews it in vast quantities. He showed me his press, and at least a hundred hogsheads in store.

Finding that I was interested in the basket-making and chair-weaving industry, he got his son to row me across the river to a factory. The voyage was undertaken in a flat-bottomed, extremely unstable sort of canoe, half full of water, in which I had to stand with legs wide apart to preserve a balance, while the current swept us down the red, muddy stream. In order to land you throw out an anchor on to the bank and hope that when the jerk comes you won't fall in. I felt far more respect for the river Tone after this voyage. It looked sluggish and narrow until I embarked on it. Then it became a mill-race and as wide as the Channel.

After landing I was conducted along the towpath past an almost blind man peeling withies, past wads and bundles of withies, peeled and unpeeled, past stacks of the withy-bark, and into a shed where a young man sat on a platform weaving withies, now dyed all sorts of colors, into a basket-chair. He told me that it took him two and a half hours to make a chair, and that, paid as he was by the piece, he reckoned to make £2 a week. Girls' fingers aren't strong enough for twisting these twigs. They have to be content with peeling or

making baskets. I saw the new brake-machine, which is worked from a motor-bicycle, turn out seventy or eighty bundles in the same time that a girl can peel nine or ten bundles.

These withy-workers are a race apart, dark, healthy, genial, with big, strong fingers and very pleasant-sounding voices. Their children are particularly attractive.

From Athelney it is only a mile or so to Weston Zoyland, the scene of the last battle fought on English soil.[7] To reach the battlefield of Sedgemoor you need thick boots. At the back of the village is a network of lanes. From one of these a wide, green, wet peat-track leads across the flat fields towards a tall flagstaff, half hidden behind a hedge, with the remnants of a blue silk flag hanging from it. To reach it means jumping a reen or so, or going round a long way.

I fell at Sedgemoor, and to fall there is to be wet to the skin. But it is worth this to reach the desolate spot where Monmouth's deluded followers were started and shot like game from the hedge-side. The monument erected on the scene is tactful and does equal justice to both parties, though the number of Royalists who fell was only sixteen as against a couple of thousand poor wretches who suffered from the severity of the Bloody Assize. The Royalist General, Lord Feversham, seems to have been an unpleasant person. Having agreed to pardon one of the prisoners, who was extremely fleet of foot, if he would entertain him with an example of his agility, he caused one end of a halter to be put round his neck and the opposite end to be placed round the neck of a horse, and the horse was then sent off at a gallop. The man kept up from Bussex Reen to

Brentsfield Bridge, and then Lord Feversham hanged him after all. It is pleasant to think that at any rate Daniel Defoe outwitted his vigilance, though how any one could escape across these saturated fields I can't think. The only cover is under water. It is a nightmare of a battlefield.

I returned to Glastonbury by way of Ashcott Heath, the land of the peat-cutters. Out of the reed-covered marsh there rises a mighty host of black piled heaps of peat that look like bent old Irish women in black shawls working in the swamp. Close by here is the famous lake-village of Meare, where some 2,000-year-old little artificial islands have been discovered, and on these mounds the Celts of the early iron age built their thatched houses of upright posts, and walls of wattle and daub, and practiced their arts and crafts.

In the afternoon I climbed Glastonbury Tor, on the top of which is the ruined church of St. Michael.[8] It is only five hundred feet high, but the green slopes are steep and slippery and I had them to myself. The view from the top is on every side wide, as befits an island peak. Everywhere one looks across flats already partly submerged to distant hills or the sea.

I was particularly lucky because exactly as I got to the top the sun shone on the towers of Wells Cathedral lying under the far hills and the whole city lay arched by a rainbow which embraced the whole Mendip range.

But even as I turned westward, first the seascape and then the land became blotted out by a vast sheet of gray rain which almost at once wiped out all vestige of even the houses below. A girl appeared out of the

encircling gloom. We ran down the steep hill together. She told me that she was staying at the house at the foot of the hill, in the garden of which was the sacred Chalice Well. I said that I would like to see it. She went off to get permission. She returned crestfallen to tell me that the Warden was out with the key in his possession, but that Mr. Warren at the Arts and Crafts across the road knew all about it.

She led me to a shed where a gray-haired man and a young girl in a green jumper were at work hammering and molding clay. Instantly the man stopped work to tell me of the Holy Well which has never been dry in the history of man. "It was a prehistoric Druid's well," he said. "It is orientated by the Dog Star, Sirius, whose cycle is 2,700 years. That gives you the date of its origin as 300 or 3,000 B.C." He showed me where St. George killed the dragon and explained how the saint got the Red Cross on his shield. He talked of St. Bridget. All the saints except St. Andrew seem to have had a stake at Glastonbury. "This," he said, "is the Valhalla of the ancient heroes, one of the seven great occult power-stations of the world. On it sacred and secret rites are still carried on."

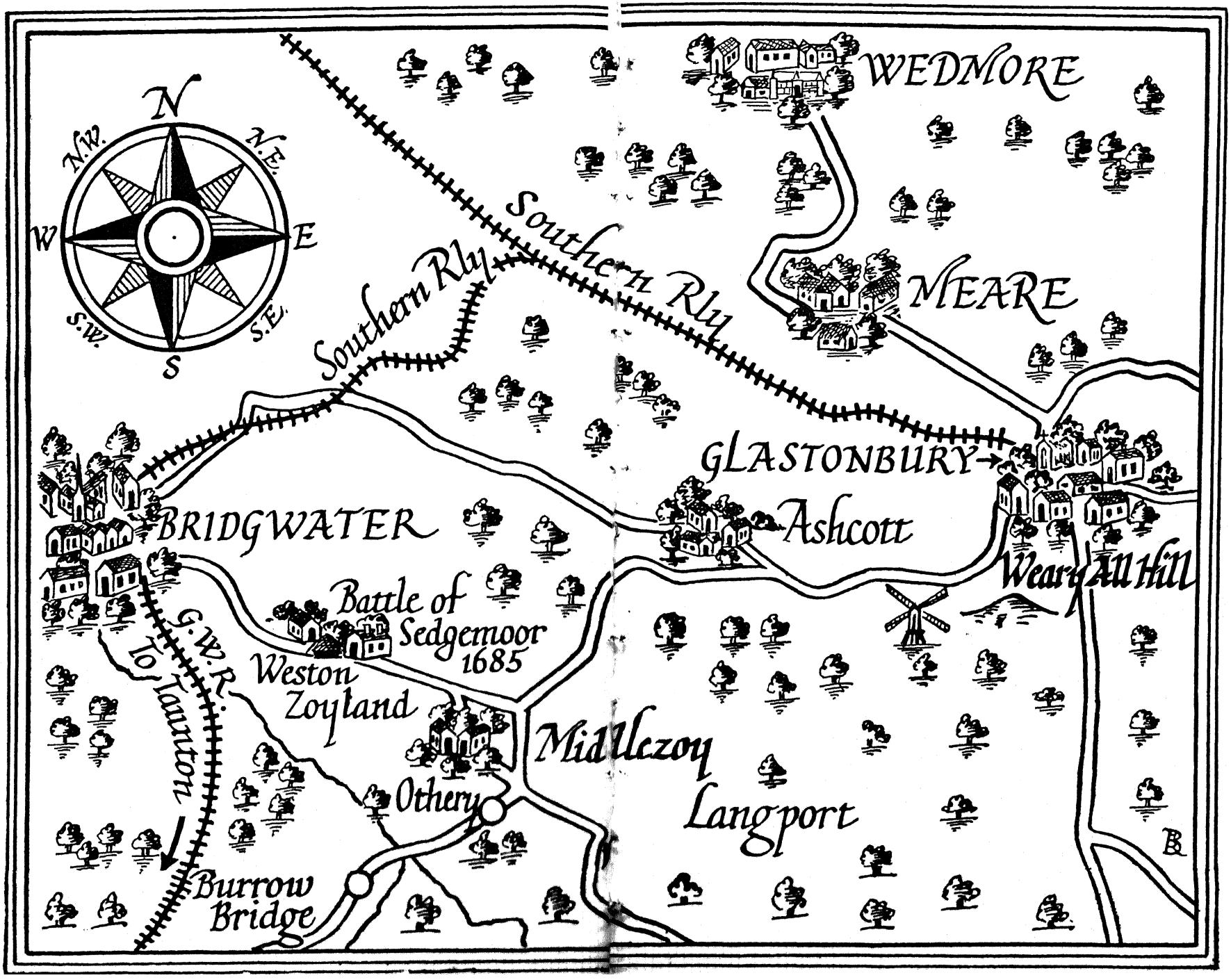
He led me to believe that in the sides of this hill are hidden many strange treasures. Luckily the Lord of the Manor does not encourage diggers. The Tor remains inviolate.

Glastonbury itself does not. A car-park on one side of the Abbey gates and a cinema on the other betray a strange obliquity of vision. But the spirit of the past here is far too strong to be dispelled by any such unexpected intrusion of modern vulgarity.

What will finally impel you to go to Glastonbury I don't know, but having got there you will gain in these quiet reed-fringed marshes, smiling water-meadows and apple-orchards a sense of tranquillity such as you will find in a few other places. Beauty here is soft and steals over you imperceptibly. She does not overpower you with her grandeur. Serenity is the keynote of Avalon. But more important than the serenity is the sense of continuity that this place evokes. Here more completely than anywhere else that I know can we trace each link in the chain of evidence of our national history. From the Celtic lake-village dwellers of 200 B.C. to the peat-cutters of 1932, from Druid to Christian, from the chivalry of the Knights of the Round Table to the chivalry of the swineherd's wife who saved Alfred from the Danes, and the chivalry of those market-women and station-master who came to the rescue of that poor woman in Bridgewater station, from the downfall of the Monasteries to the downfall of Monmouth, everywhere there is evidence of the mold from which you and I, in our complexity, are made.

It is good occasionally to unravel the tangled skein of our origins, to look back at intervals at the rock whence we were hewn.

A visit to Glastonbury does this for us. It does more. It reminds us that in youth we set out in quest of the Holy Grail. That is a reminder that I, for one, need.[9]


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Southern Rly
Southern Rly
Southern Rly
MEARE
GLASTONBURY
BRIDGWATER
Ashcott
Weary All Hill
Battle of
Sedgemoor
1685
G.W.R.
To Taunton
Weston
Zoyland
Middlezoy
Othery
Langport
Burrow
Bridge

3. THE LINCOLNSHIRE FENS

DO you think that Lincolnshire is a dull country? If you do, it must be because you have never been there. It isn't even flat, except in the Fens, and flatness in the Fens does not mean monotony.

William of Malmesbury, some eight hundred years ago, described them thus: "It is a plain country and as level as the sea which with green grass allureth the eye." It still allures the eye, but not only with green grass.

I entered the Fen country by way of Sleaford, where one passes in a flash from first-rate hunting country into an open, flat land with very little pasture. This is Lincolnshire Fenland. Nearly every available acre is plowed. This is the richest soil in England, and black, pitch black.

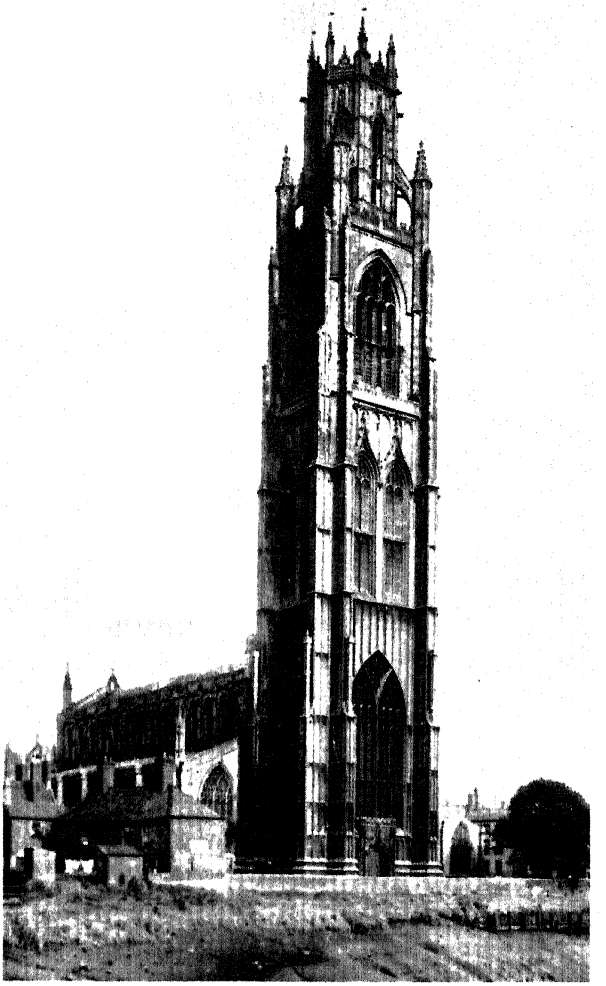
The landscape, which for miles on every side was as clearly defined and as tidy as an illustration to a nursery-rhyme, faded on the far, flat horizon to a sort of thin, gray heat haze. This combination of softness and brightness in the light adds a peculiarly lovely luster to everything. The main impression one gets is of an immense, flat, black shining bed, cut into rectangles and squares by thin strips of silver, shining water. Over this bed move very slowly horses pulling the plow, and scarlet-painted wagons loaded with sacks of potatoes. Tall,

rectangular, isolated farms of red brick stand in midfield, apparently completely cut off from the highway. There are no hedges, but, oddly enough, there are a good many trees, which are dotted singly and at haphazard, just as the farms are, all over the place, except in the red-brick villages on the main roads, where they cluster round the church.

These Lincolnshire churches have a grace and a splendor unsurpassed by the churches of any other county. First, of course, their tall, gray spires and pinnacled towers stand out wonderfully against the blue of the sky and the flat softness of the surrounding land. In other counties there are other grays, gray stone walls and gray houses, but in the Fens the churches have no competitors. There are no walls; the houses are all of red brick; there isn't a stone in the soil, not a quarry in the land. The medieval builders of these magnificent churches had to carry their stone from Ancaster or Barnak. In their eyes, one feels, beauty was light, light beauty, for, having built these lofty churches of the lightest gray stone, they then designed huge Perpendicular windows, which make them seem to be all windows, and to these they added, quite unnecessarily, clerestories. They were fanatics about light. The result is dazzling.

And near the churches are tall, round tower windmills, usually tarred, except for the gallery, cupola, fantail and sweeps, which are white. These are no mere picturesque survivors of a dead industry. Their sails still revolve and creak in the wind. They still grind corn.

But every other building in this country is dwarfed



Dixon-Scott

BOSTON STUMP



SPALDING

Times photo.

in comparison with the stupendous and lovely church tower of Boston, known locally as "T'ow'd Stoomp," which rises nearly three hundred feet above the flats, and can be seen from nearly forty miles away.

Boston Stump stands actually on the very bank of the River Witham, and looks as if three towers had been built one on top of another and then surmounted by an octagonal lantern crowned with a parapet of pierced tracery and pinnacles. From a great distance it looks like a giant tree without branches. From near by it simply overwhelms one with its symmetry and magnificence, as William Cobbett discovered.

Seen from the train, as I first saw it—I was on my way to Horncastle—you look at nothing else until it disappears from view. I decided to return to Boston for the night.

Horncastle is an enchanting place, not only to lovers of George Borrow—you remember his account of the famous horse-fair in "Romany Rye"—the gypsies still attend it—but because of its atmosphere. It can scarcely have changed at all since Borrow visited it. Like all its neighbors, it is built of red brick, it is spotlessly clean, it is full of old, gabled inns, and shop-windows full of guns and farm-tools. On the walls of the church I saw the twelve rusty scythes that George Borrow was told were used against Cromwell in the battle of Winceby, but I was told that they were mementoes of the Pilgrimage of Grace. Horncastle was my furthest north. The railway ends there.

I started out south along a lonely road, and after a few miles came to an out-of-the-way hamlet called Scrivelsby.[1] Now the odd thing is that this remote

place, of which few people have ever heard, is the home of the King's Hereditary Champion, the Lincolnshire squire to whom has fallen the honor, right from the time of William the Conqueror to a little over a hundred years ago, of riding in full armor into Westminster Hall at each coronation, and challenging to mortal combat any one who dare dispute the title of the new king. For the first two hundred years the King's Champion was a Marmion, the same Marmion Sir Walter Scott wrote about, and then by marriage the title passed to the Dymokes (pronounced Dimmok), who have held it ever since, though in these less picturesque times the Dymoke of the day has to be content with the title of The Bearer of the Standard of England. But the same fee of a gold cup is still given by each king on his coronation to his Champion.

Over the gateway of this isolated park is carved a fine stone lion wearing a crown. On the other side of the road from the house, in the middle of a field, is the church. I found it locked, and to get the key from the rectory entailed running right through the middle of Mr. Dymoke's pheasant shoot. To my intense surprise, I went both to and fro unmolested. I must have saved the lives of many pheasants.

In the church I found a much mutilated stone effigy of Philip Lord Marmion and a brass of Sir Robert Dymoke, who was both Knight and Baronet [2] at the same time, a very small, troubled-looking man in armor and spurs, with an enormous beard and long, flowing hair, who lived under five kings and died in 1545, having been Champion to Richard III, Henry VII, and Henry VIII.

As I went along the road, a little wizened man passed me driving a cart piled high with bedding, tables, chairs and carpets—all his earthly goods. I was reminded by the sight of a sort of general-post on April 6th of each year, when the roads are full of these "confine" men, who are hired in the open market for one year, and then fetched from their old home by the farmer who engages them, and taken to their new one.

Soon I saw below me, very close together, the five-sailed windmill of Coningsby, the gray towers of Coningsby and Tattershall churches, and the four-square, grim, red-brick keep of Tattershall Castle, now, owing to the magnificent generosity of Lord Curzon, the property of the nation for all time. Coningsby church tower stands on arches under which you could drive a carriage. Tattershall Castle is surrounded by a double moat, and is one hundred and twelve feet high. It was intended by Ralph Cromwell, who built it in 1440, to be both a house of entertainment and an impregnable defense. It is four stories high and the walls are twenty-two feet thick in the basement. Can you visualize a wall twenty-two feet thick? The walls, floors, and ceilings of all its fifty rooms are of bright Northampton brick. The only other brick castle of this period in England is Hurstmonceux, in Sussex.[8] The magnificent stone fireplaces with their carved coats-of-arms were sold to America, and had actually been taken as far as Tilbury Dock when Lord Curzon intervened and restored them.

The fifteenth-century church is scarcely less remarkable than the castle. It is the finest church of its period in England. A Mr. Skipworth, whom I met in the village, showed me some queer devices in the castle walls,

three sets of diamond-shaped patterns in black bricks, with a larger and smaller diamond in each set, the larger containing nine and the smaller four, making thirteen in each set. He also told me that the three principal men and three principal women concerned with the building all had names of thirteen letters. I certainly counted for myself thirteen blank shields over the western doorway of the church and saw the number thirteen in Roman numerals worked in the brick of the castle wall. Rather odd, this.

As I walked down to the station in the dusk three brace of partridges whirred over my head and a few plover restlessly wheeled and as restlessly cried in a field. I was suddenly reminded of Cobbett's discovery. It is true. There seem to be no singing birds in this part of the county.

As my train drew in at Boston station, I saw two lights high up in the Stump, and remembered that it was once used not only as a lighthouse for men at sea, but for wayfarers over the Fens. But these lights were for the workmen who are repairing the Stump.

The streets between Boston station and the river are narrow, cobbled and very ancient. From the bridge itself there is a view on the one side of the Stump and on the other of tall, bleak-faced warehouses, of sailing barges bobbing up and down on the tidal water. Beyond the bridge is the Market Square. It was here, in the "Rum Puncheon" Inn, that John Foxe, the author of the "Book of Martyrs," was born in 1517.

Boston, by reason of its wharves and winding river, is a magic place by night. But it is no less magic by day, if that day is Wednesday, which is Market Day.

When I looked out of my bedroom window the next morning I saw booths being erected, tables laid out, a series of what looked like bathing-machines being moored to the kerb, and an unending procession of motor-cars, with calves and pigs and sheep and hens and rabbits and ducks carried in two-wheeled trailers behind.

My first business after breakfast was to see the magnificent church.[4] As the Stump was under repair, I could not climb it, but I found consolation in the companionship of the ancient verger who told me that he had sailed round the world in a clipper-ship and now wanted to go up in a balloon. This is the spirit of Boston today. In the old Guildhall I got a good example of the spirit of the Boston of yesterday, for there I saw the actual cells in which the Pilgrim Fathers were imprisoned for daring to try to leave the country in 1607. It was not, you remember, until 1620 that they actually set sail from Plymouth in the "Mayflower" to found that other Boston in Massachusetts.[5]

I was told by the caretaker of the Guildhall that in the olden days the cattle-market was so important that noblemen from as far afield as Northumberland attended it.

I found this market filled with grizzled, weather-beaten, prosperous farmers watching the auctioning of bulls, spindle-legged grooms in white stocks, sucking straws [6] as they gaped at the horses; small boys gazing longingly at the rabbits, and stolid herdsmen patiently cajoling intractable pigs.

They spoke the purest English I have ever heard.[7] Boston is a queer place. In this market you are in the

very heart of England. By the quay you are in Holland. In the medieval streets you are in Normandy. But it is more than queer. It is inexhaustibly fascinating, and very difficult to leave.

I went on to Spalding by motor-bus. The Fens looked altogether different, for the haze of the day before had been succeeded by a crystal clarity everywhere. The vistas were immense. The sun, I felt, had an enormous tract of sky to cover between sunrise and sunset.

I saw a sign-post leading to Quadring Eaudyke.[8] Not only the place-names, but the people's names are uncommon. Do you know any one called Bonos, Polliod, or Twelvetrees? [9] I came across all three that day.

In the "White Hart" at Spalding, I saw the room where Mary Queen of Scots slept before going to Fotheringay, I saw the churchyard kept neat by grazing sheep,[10] and I saw a most beautiful fifteenth century red-brick house with Dutch gables, in a most sad state of decay. This is Ascoughfee [11] Hall, now partly let off as a kindergarten and partly for meetings and dances. The sooner the Spalding authorities or the National Trust wake up to the necessity of preserving this house, which has some medieval stained-glass worth a king's ransom, the better. It ought to be easy, for Spalding gives the impression of being not only a beautiful but a wealthy town. Its houses are solid and dignified, and its trade is flourishing.

After leaving Spalding I passed along a banked road above Cowbit Wash [12] where the skating championships are held, and looked over vast sheets of water with occasional trees and gates emerging. Just before I got to Crowland I saw a post on which was inscribed the fact

that one Henry Girdlestone had walked one thousand miles in one thousand hours at the age of fifty-six between that spot and Crowland Abbey. A more sensible age uses tricycles. I saw a number of long-whiskered and bearded ancients tricycling along these flat roads.

Crowland, or Croyland, Abbey (which is it, w or y—?) [18] stands up in the very middle of the Fens. "The horizon," Cobbett said, "is like the sea in a dead calm —not a sign of a dock or thistle or any other weed to be seen, earth without a stone so big as a pin's head." It was here that St. Guthlac landed in 699, and it was here that King Ethelbald took sanctuary and built the first stone church, destroyed in turn by Danes, fire, earthquake and Henry VIII. Only the nave, the wonderful west front, and a dog-tooth Norman arch remain. The rector, who took me over, reminded me that this is the burial-ground of Hereward the Wake, son of the Lady Godiva. Torfrida, his wife, was buried by his side. The stone from which the Abbey was built came from Barnak, where Charles Kingsley's father was rector, so we now know why "Hereward the Wake" was written.

The triangular, thirteenth-century, gray stone packhorse bridge of Crowland is, in its way, as remarkable as the Abbey. It has three pointed arches about nine feet high under which streams once flowed, and three narrow cobbled ways over it with thirteen steps on one side, and six on each of the other two. There is a very mutilated ancient stone figure on one side. This bridge is said to mark the boundaries of three counties, Cambridge, Northampton and Lincoln. Edward IV sailed

from here in 1468 for Fotheringay, which is twenty-two miles distant.

On the way back to Spalding I stopped at Pode Hall to look at the great Pumping Station, and the sight of engines of the kind that one associates with the "Berengaria" gave me some idea of the importance of drainage to the fenland farmer.

As I reëntered Spalding, the girls were all bicycling home from work. Their handlebars were festooned with enormous bunches of daffodils, tulips and narcissi. The shop-windows were all decorated with these flowers. All the glasshouses were a blaze of yellow. I felt as if I had suddenly been transported to the Scilly Isles—and yet I was within a mile of the place where the British Skating Championships are held. The date, remember, was the 13th of January. And yet there are people who complain about our climate; there are people who think Lincolnshire dull. Dull! Well.... Well.

On the next page is "The Poacher," the marching song of the Lincolnshire Regiment, kindly sent to me by an anonymous correspondent.

THE LINCOLNSHIRE POACHER

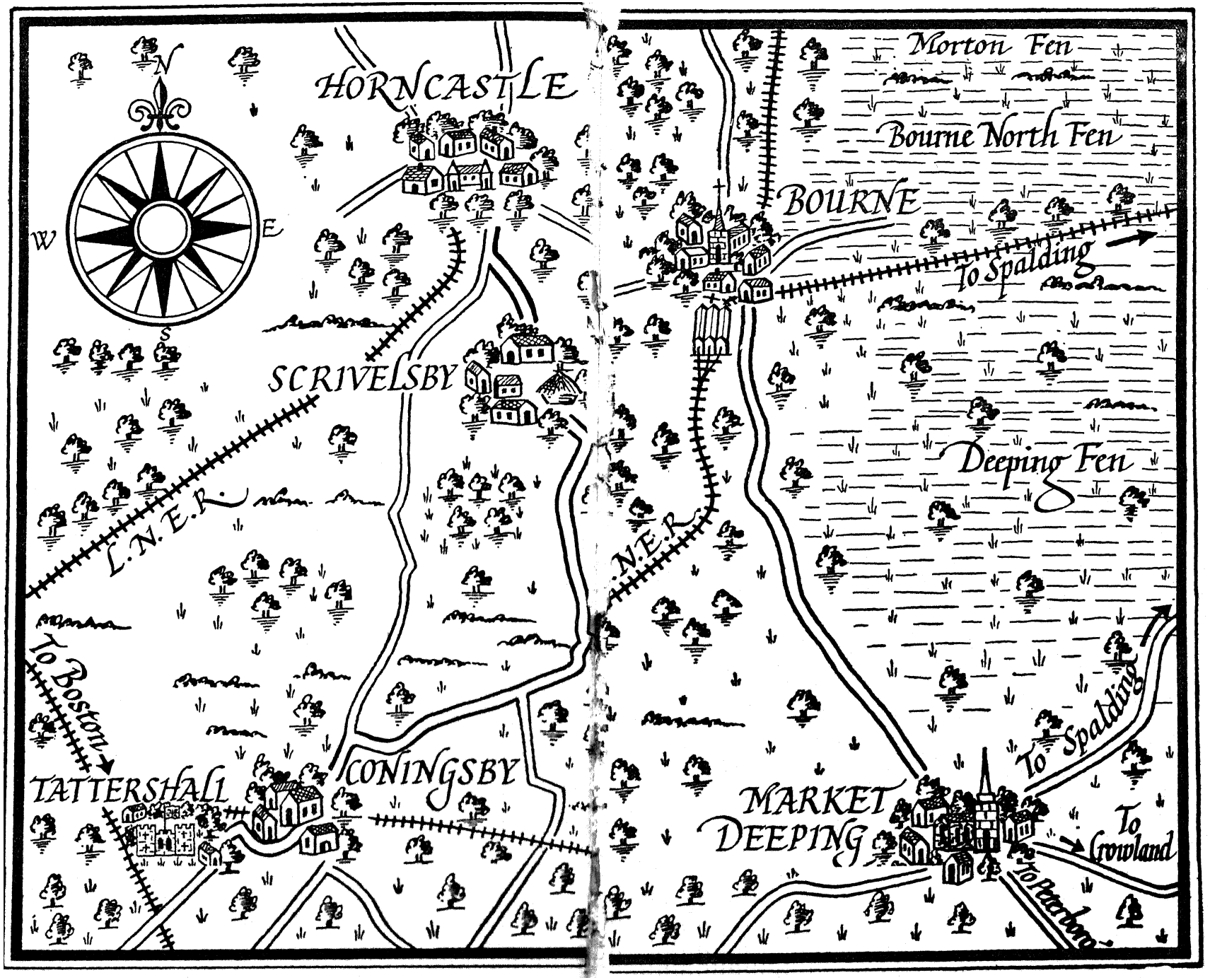
When I was bound apprentice in famous Lincolnshire,
Full well I serv'd my master, for more than seven year
Till I took up to poaching, as you shall quickly hear;
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shiny night,
In the season of the year.

When me and my companions were setting of a snare,
'Twas then we spied the game-keeper, for him we did not care.
For we can wrestle and fight, my boys, and jump o'er anywhere.
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shiny night, etc.

When me and my companions were setting four or five,
And taking on 'em up again, we caught a hare alive,
We took the hare alive, my boys, and through the wood did steer.
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shiny night, etc.

I threw him on my shoulder, and then we trudged home,
We took him to a neighbour's house and sold him for a crown,
We sold him for a crown, my boys, but I need not tell you where.
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shiny night, etc.

Success to every gentleman that lives in Lincolnshire,
Success to every poacher that wants to sell a hare,
Bad luck to every game-keeper that will not sell his deer.
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shiny night, etc.


N
W
E
S
HORNCASTLE
SCRIVELSBY
L.N.E.R.
To Boston
TATTERSHALL
CONINGSBY
Morton Fen
Bourne North Fen
BOURNE
To Spalding
Deeping Fen
L.N.E.R.
To Spalding
MARKET DEEPING
To Crowland
To Peterboro

4. THE PEAK DISTRICT

WHEN you think of home, do you think of the home of your ancestors, the home of your childhood, or the home you now occupy for the sake of your work? For many of you the problem does not arise. All three homes are the same. Well, you are the lucky ones. I owe a divided loyalty. My own family has never moved out of Devon during the last 1,200 years. Devon, therefore, is my home. It is not an unknown county. Because I love the sun, and because it is convenient for my work, I live in Sussex, which can scarcely claim to be an unknown county. But my childhood and all the impressionable years of my life were spent in Derbyshire, and Derbyshire is the county that I invariably think of when I think of home. The Derbyshire dialect comes naturally to me. I cannot speak one word of Devonian or Sussex.

Now Derbyshire *is* an unknown county. And this I find very odd, for, as Ruskin discovered, it is a lovely child's alphabet, an alluring first lesson in all that is admirable.

It is a sort of Lilliput England, enshrined in the very heart of England, with all England's most characteristic beauties reproduced in miniature—her wild moors, her cliffs, her winding rivers, her woods and meadows,

her medieval manor houses, superb churches and compact, dignified villages.

If all England were lost but this one small midland county, you could still in after years rebuild the old England from this perfect model of her, for she is not only *in* the heart of England; she *is* the heart of England.

Other counties have undergone a sea-change. Prosperity has smiled on them and they have become, in the words of uncompromising Derbyshire, "soft." Derbyshire has not gone soft, nor ever will. She is as unchanging as the Sphinx. The same families that were of good report here in the Middle Ages are still here, and still of good report.

They do not plow the soft, yielding earth. They blast it with dynamite to quarry the stone. They sink shafts to the very bowels of the earth to follow the seams of coal. They wander along subterranean caverns that were old when the Romans found them, in search of lead. Read Mr. Boden's "Miner," if you want to know how they live.

If you have hitherto avoided Derbyshire it cannot be because of her people, because in them you will recognize yourself at your best and most English, unspoiled by any veneer of affectation. That their candor is to some natures disconcerting and misleading is apparent in Mr. Hilaire Belloc's poem describing the Midlands as sodden and unkind. He could not have hit upon two words less applicable.

Whatever else has kept you from Derbyshire it can't be the scenery. Byron meant it when he said that Derbyshire possesses scenery as *noble* as any in Greece

or Switzerland. *Noble* is the word. Sublimity does not depend on size but symmetry. Dovedale is just as satisfying as the Jungfrau.

Let us look at this Derbyshire scenery a little more closely.

I began my journey from Glossop, a pleasant town of calico, paper and cotton mills, in a deep, green ravine entirely surrounded by high brown and black moors, deeply scarred by gullies, in this country called cloughs. They still use Anglo-Saxon and Middle English words freely. When they say starving they mean cold, as our ancestors did. The surprising thing about it is that it is on the very fringe of Manchester. Look back and the sky is murky. Look ahead and all is blue. As I looked back I felt like Christian fleeing from the City of Destruction. In front of me lay the high, vast tableland of Kinder Scout, a name to strike terror into the hearts of the unwary, for in its unprotected peat-bogs, called "mosses," many lives have been lost in snow and fog.

I had struck an almost perfect day. All the dark, rocky edges above, coming into view at each turn of the road, were as clearly defined as if after rain. But it hadn't been raining for weeks. The cloughs were white with waterfalls, but it looked dry enough underfoot on the moor itself as I came to the top, where there are shortened telegraph posts without wires, black at the top and white at the bottom, to guide the traveler lost in the snow or fog. There have been snowdrifts thirty-four feet deep along this road.

From here, about 1,700 feet above sea-level, I looked down a narrow, winding pass, not unlike the lower part of Glencoe, with hills closing in and folding over in

front of me. Soon I came to the "Snake" Inn. The landlord was (I think rightly) annoyed at not having a traveler's license. It is the only place of refuge for seven miles in any direction, and exhausted wanderers can only be revived after hours if they decide to stay for the night. Just opposite the "Snake" Inn is a stile and a notice-board announcing the fact that the public are allowed to cross Kinder Scout only if they keep to one well-defined path and never stray from it. Dogs may be taken if kept on the lead.

In disgust I took this path and tried, being a law-abiding sort of person, to obey the injunction. It is quite impossible. The path is not only easy. It is fool-proof. You could ride a bicycle on it. You could walk along it in suede shoes. The moor is exactly like Dartmoor in that there rise on one side vast tors and clitters of rocks of all sorts of uncouth shapes, but they stand on the further side of Ashop Clough, up some steep screes, and are *verboten.* Equally *verboten* is the open moor, which looks exactly like Dartmoor at Cranmere, full of huge peat bogs, bilberry bushes (yes—I know we call them whortleberries in Devon), heather and dead bracken. What is not like Dartmoor is that at every yard you rouse an irritated, ugly, red-faced, fat bird, excellent to eat, but ungainly in flight and unmusical in voice. "Urrr—g-back—g-back—g-back," grunts every grouse on Kinder Scout, not in tones of fright, but authoritatively, as if he were his own keeper.

The sooner Kinder Scout ceases to be a grouse moor and becomes a National Park the better. For Kinder Scout is grand. Make no mistake about that. But, in spite of the fact that I had it entirely to myself, encoun-

tering no other living creature than the thousands of brace of grouse and a few score black-faced, dirty-looking horned sheep, with no other sound in my ears but that of falling water and querulous grouse, I was not happy. It was all spoilt by having to keep to a path.[1] We have no paths on Dartmoor.

Yet the fascination of Kinder Scout was great enough for me to climb it again the next day, this time crossing it on the south side. The track over Edale Cross is even wider and more plainly defined. I expected to encounter motor-cyclists. The grouse just sit on the walls and mock at you as you pass: "G-back—g-back—g-back." There were even more notice-boards warning me off. But the scenery is wilder and the views far more magnificent. It is no longer like Dartmoor. It is like the Highlands.

Tired of walking in a strait-jacket I left the black and brown grouse moors and went south to the green and gray Derbyshire of the lead-mines—to me a much happier land, because it is free. The sun was still shining as I passed over this upland limestone country of small, rectangular, green fields, bounded by light gray unmortared walls, and solid dignified villages of gray stone houses into the winding, wooded valleys of the Wye and Derwent. My first objective was the Mill Close Mine, the largest lead-mine now working, near Darley Dale. The manager, Mr. Williams, who is at once an historian, a philologist, a bibliophile, a scientist and an Australian, very kindly took me all over it.

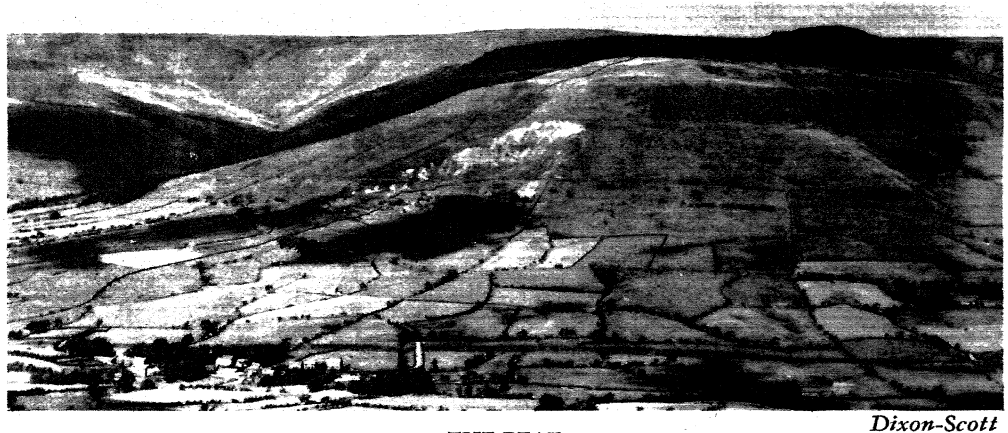
The first shaft of the mine is 400 feet deep, then you walk along a passage for 1,200 yards, and then go down another shaft for a further 250 feet.

I saw the rough material come up the shaft, pass up

the inclined planes to be crushed, washed, dressed and separated. In one place I watched boys picking out of quickly passing trays, muddy, wet lumps that, to me, looked exactly alike, but they threw one forward and another backward into heaps, one pile being pure lead, the other being pure spar.

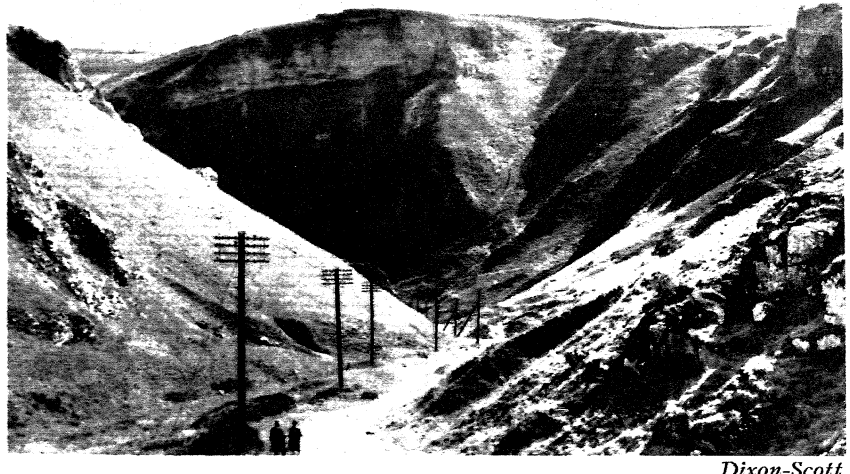
The rest was crushed into different sizes and passed through jigging jars and over jazzing tables with water flowing through all the time, shaking the heavy lead to the bottom and keeping the lighter spar on the top. A short, uneasy motion vertically occurred simultaneously with a regular shaking horizontally. I felt glad that I was not a piece of lead. I have seen instruments of torture like these in fairs and heard the victims' screams, but those are short and these are continuous. They never stop. Three enormous pumps are forever working on the water—three million gallons a day, is it? Like Hamlet, I am ill at these numbers. And, all the time, day and night, the miners, working underground in shifts throughout the week, split the hard rock with compressed-air drills.

I saw the lead being taken away in lorries, and never before realized how vast a lorry is necessary for so small a volume of lead. I saw the wages of the week, about £1,200, being brought up under armed escort. The age of highwaymen is not dead, and bandits are discouraged in Derbyshire. If any one stole lead in the old days his right hand was pinned to the stow with a knife and another knife was put into his left hand. If he wished to be released, all he had to do was to cut off his own right hand at the wrist. The alternative was to stand there till he died.



Dixon-Scott

THE PEAK



Dixon-Scott

THE PEAK CAVERN, CASTLETON

The mining customs are very old and very odd. Any man might search for veins of lead-ore wherever he wished, except in house, church, garden or orchard. If he found lead, the Barmaster with two other men by his side, all with arms stretched until their fingers just touched, walked from the shaft to the nearest road, and all the land in between could be used by the prospector for transporting his ore.

The miner here is also the husbandman, for he is always granted leave at harvest-time to take in the hay and corn.

After leaving Mill Close Mine I went on to another lead mine by way of Haddon Hall, one of England's loveliest medieval castles, now not only closed to the public but even (which strikes me as unnecessary) shut off from their view by newly-planted shrubs. I looked at the eighth-century Saxon cross in Bakewell churchyard and at a quite perfect, tiny, alabaster, fourteenth-century monument, depicting the head of Godfrey Foljambe in chain-mail and the head of Avena, his wife, in one of those lovely oval, honeycombed headdresses of Chaucer's time.

Then I climbed out of the wooded valley of the Wye on to the stone-wall uplands that look down on the winding gorge of Monsal Dale, one of Derbyshire's supreme glories. Then I continued along the high plateau of small fields, almost every one of which has a circular gray stone wall in the middle to show where some one once sunk a shaft for lead, until I came to the village of Eyam, which stands perched on a ledge below a high moor full of prehistoric circles and barrows, and above a narrow, rocky, wooded gorge, known as Middleton Dale.

Eyam is a long, straggling village of great dignity and beauty, with a three-storied, gray stone, gabled Tudor hall, with mullioned windows of diamond-paned glass and stone terraces, and a churchyard in which we are reminded of an episode in her history of which she is justly proud.

In 1665 a box of cloth arrived from London for the village tailor, whose house still stands. From that box spread the plague destroying 317 people out of a population of 390.[2] That it did not spread beyond this village was due to the rector, William Mompesson, and his predecessor, Thomas Stanley, who inspired the people not to stray beyond the confines of the parish. Food was placed in a series of water troughs and fetched from there. The spirits of the villagers were kept up by open-air services held in a dell overlooking the gorge in front of the Hall. In the churchyard, close to an eighth-century Saxon cross and under an ancient yew, lies the body of Catherine Mompesson, the rector's wife, who died of the plague. In a field nearby are the graves of the family of Hancock. On August 3rd, 1666, two children died, on the 6th the father and two sons, on the 9th a daughter, and on the 10th another daughter. The mother had to dig the graves and bury all seven. Seven in one family in one week. She survived.

In view of this calamity you perhaps visualize Eyam as a sort of Pompeii. Instead you will find a vigorous community of laughing, healthy, good-looking children, solid, prosperous-looking houses, a flourishing Young Farmers' League, and a general sense of well-being. And these are the descendants of the villagers who stayed the plague and survived it. The fine thing about it is

that any other Derbyshire village might be relied on to show without second thought similar heroism.

I saw my first snowdrops of the year in Eyam churchyard. I then went by way of Hassop Park, where old Lord Denman used to take his pigs out with him in his carriage, to Bradford Dale. Here the scenery changes again. Gone are the upland grass fields and the stone walls. We are now in a wooded dell by the side of a shallow water, described by Cotton as the clearest and most transparent trout stream either at home or abroad.

Just above it is the village of Youlgreave, another long, straggling, gray village of great dignity, with a fifteenth-century church tower of great beauty, a village perched on a shelf with lovely Lathkill Dale at its back, and Bradford Dale at its feet. Just above it is a strange, wild land known only to archæologists, for here is Arbor Low, a stone circle, more ancient and less spoilt than Stonehenge. Near by, still working, is the Long Rake lead-mine. Rake means vein. Owing to the kindness of the owner, Captain Potter, I went down this mine.

All along the tree-fringed lane of the Long Rake he showed me disused shafts, evidence of surface mining, and the old "buddles" where they used to sift the lead in pools. The spar produced here is as useful as the lead, for it is used on all the L.C.C. school playgrounds. If you cut yourself on it, it heals again, clean.

I was made to put on a cap with reluctance—I never wear anything on my head—and a yellow overall, and armed with a lamp. I was then pushed into a cage on which the trucks are brought up; and by bending down and squeezing there was just room for Jim the fore-

man, Captain Potter, and myself. All the men I met were called only by their Christian names. We descended through some three or four hundred feet of solid, wet rock and then entered a narrow gallery where a truck was waiting to take our places in the cage.

When other trucks came along there was just room to squeeze against the sides of the dripping limestone to let them pass. Misled by a distant light, I hit my head a fearful crash against the top of the gallery and realized the importance of a cap, and, as a result, only felt it as much as if I had taken a toss out hunting. The way was not straight. After a hundred yards or so we slithered down a steep incline to a face, where I saw compressed-air drills at work. You've heard them on the roads, so you can imagine the noise they make under the earth. There seemed to be lead everywhere. After walking back a little way I saw a black hole above me. A ladder was produced, and I climbed through this hole into other galleries going off in all directions, mainly upward very steeply. I scrambled over loose stones up to another face and listened to Jim getting more and more ecstatic over the lead which he kept on dislodging with his fingers. At least I suppose he was being ecstatic. I couldn't hear anything except the deafening drills. There was an odd smell everywhere, not unpleasant or pleasant, just odd. It seemed a bit musty. Coal-miners, I was told, dread going down a lead-mine, and lead-miners won't go down a coal mine. That only is dangerous to which you are not accustomed.

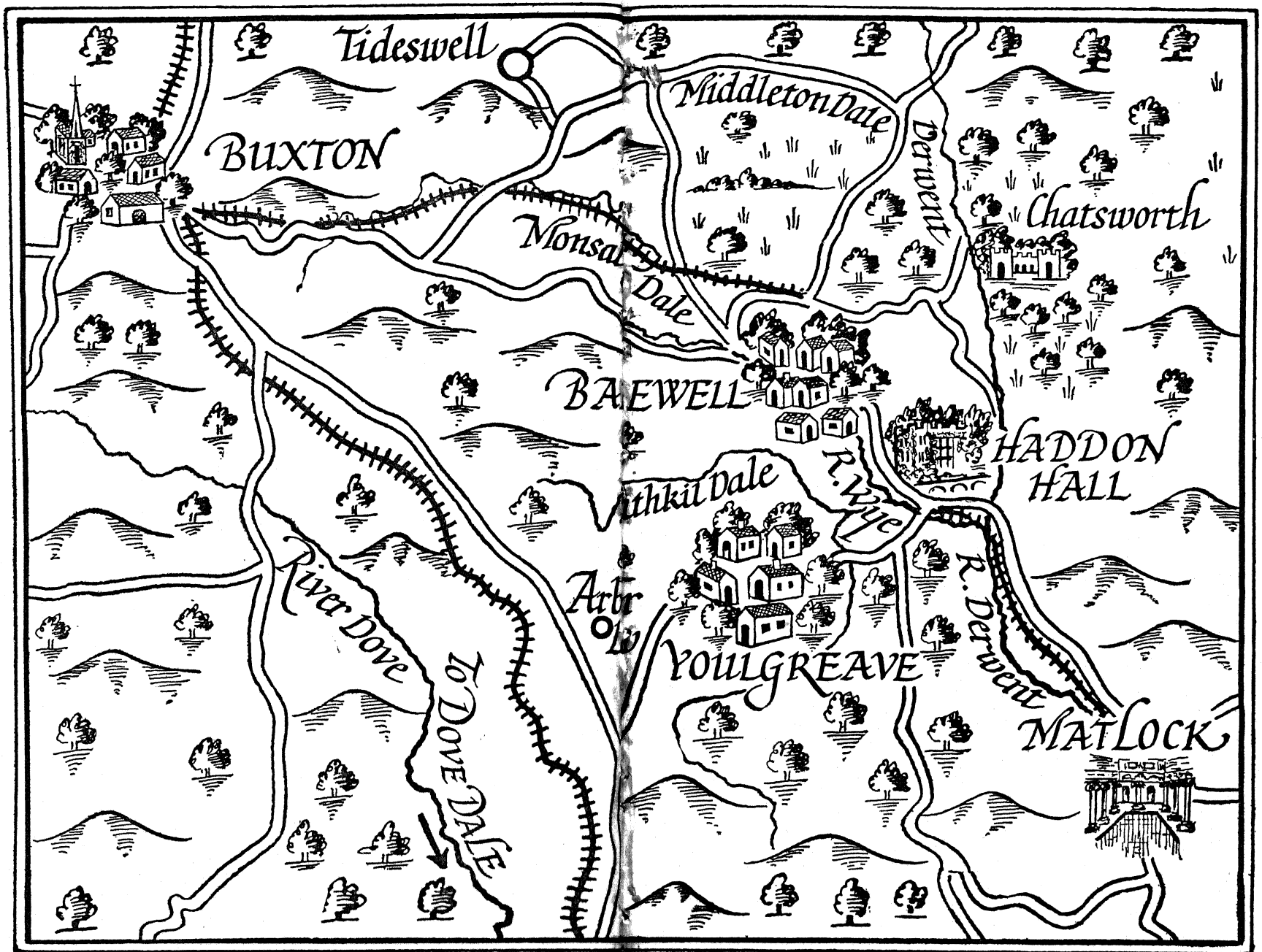
When I got to the surface again—it was pleasant to be able to stand upright once more—Captain Potter showed me some lead so light that it was actually float-

ing on top of the water. That shows you to what a pitch of perfection this business of separation by flotation is brought.

I don't know much about *working* mines—machinery always confuses me—but if you want a novel and hazardous holiday, take a trusty companion, a stout rope, miles of string and a lantern guaranteed not to fail, and explore some of the *deserted* lead-mines for yourself. You will find in these hills vast subterranean caverns, untrodden by man these thousand years, underground lakes and rivers, passages, and miles of labyrinthine ways where the ichthyosaurus once walked. You may even find lead. But don't do this alone. I was, as a boy, once lost for about twelve hours in the side of a Derbyshire hill. It is enjoyable only in retrospect. But it is worth remembering that Derbyshire offers you a double holiday, both *on* and *beneath* its surface. Can any other county offer this? If prehistoric circles interest you, if Saxon crosses interest you, if medieval churches and Tudor manors interest you, if fishing interests you, if wandering over hills, climbing cliffs, descending mines, exploring caves interest you, if meeting people who are as free from flaw as the stone they quarry, and as sturdy, interests you, then go to Derbyshire. One thing only it lacks. It isn't by the sea.

In 1662, according to Pepys, when men got annoyed with their wives they *sent* them to the Peak as a punishment. Today might it not perhaps be a good thing when a wife *pleases* her husband to *take* her to the Peak as a special treat?

Try it.


Tideswell
Middleton Dale
Derwent
BUXTON
Chatsworth
Monsal Dale
BAEWELL
HADDON HALL
R. Wye
Lathkil Dale
River Dove
To Dove Dale
Arbor Low
R. Derwent
YOULGREAVE
MATLOCK

5. NORTHUMBERLAND

THE Great Wall (built by the Roman Emperor Hadrian in A.D. 120) that runs from the east coast through Newcastle to the west coast through Carlisle, is not great in the sense that the Great Wall of China is great. It is not even as physically imposing as it used to be. You remember how Parnesius described it in "Puck of Pook's Hill":—

"Just when you think you are at the world's end you see a smoke from east to west as far as the eye can turn, and then under it, also as far as the eye can stretch, houses and temples, shops and theatres, barracks and granaries, trickling along like dice behind—one long, low, rising and falling, and hiding and showing line of towers. And that is the Wall. Along the top are towers with guard-houses, small towers between. Even on the narrowest part of it three men with shields can walk abreast from guard-house to guard-house. A little curtain wall, no higher than a man's neck, runs along the top of the thick wall, so that from a distance you see the helmets of the sentries sliding back and forth like beads. Thirty feet high is the Wall, and on the Picts' side, the North, is a ditch strewn with blades of old swords and spear heads set in wood."

Well, it is not in the least like that now. It is seldom

more than eight feet thick or ten feet high. It is often indistinguishable from any other wall until you get close to it. It often disappears altogether. And yet, as Kipling says, "old men who have followed the eagles since boyhood say nothing in the Empire is more wonderful than first sight of the Wall." Spiritually its dimensions are beyond computation.

If you would understand the Glory that was Rome, you need not visit Italy. In Northumberland you will find evidence enough of her far-flung might. But it is not only possible, but easy, to visit the Roman Wall and to miss it altogether.[1] The Roman Wall is only to be seen on foot. I don't mean that you should walk the whole seventy-three miles of it. But the best lies away from the roads, about halfway between Newcastle and Carlisle, so that it doesn't matter from which end you approach it. I have walked the Wall both ways many times, and I only selected Newcastle last week because I feel that Newcastle has so often been grotesquely misrepresented. Everybody knows the beauty and history of Carlisle. Few have taken the pains to discover the fact that Newcastle also possesses a beauty and a history no less splendid.

Newcastle is a very ancient city that has developed a modern industry without losing its vision. The finding of coal, the building of liners, the production of iron and steel, have not been allowed to obliterate the dusky beauty of its fifteenth-century Cathedral spire or the majesty of its Norman Black Gate. Its new bridge is one of the Seven Wonders of the Engineering World, and its once impregnable city walls still stand. Outside these Earl Douglas challenged Harry Hotspur

to come out with his English archers and meet him in battle, which battle was fought under an August moon in 1388 some thirty miles away at Otterburn, as is recounted by Froissart, and repeated with more spirit and less accuracy in the famous ballads of "Chevy Chase" and the "Battle of Otterburn."

But Newcastle's sense of vision is best seen on its Town Moor,[2] which is really a moor and yet in the town. Every man, woman, child and animal is free to roam, scamper and play here without let or hindrance. The miner fresh from the pit plays his own form of bowls, boys play football, girls play hockey, and horsemen gallop. This is Newcastle's crowning glory, and explains the use of the adjective in John Wesley's statement that he knew no pleasanter place in Great Britain. Newcastle is more than pleasant. It is free.

When I left Newcastle the sun was trying to break through the mists, but it was still freezing hard. They were skating on the ponds. The maid who called me told me that there was no wind, and until I got on to the Wall there wasn't.

At Hexham, where the streets have the oddest names —Priestpopple, Hencotes, and Quatre Bras—I nearly missed seeing the Abbey altogether because at 9.45 the doors were still locked. But even as I went slowly away the verger appeared and explained that it was the severe cold that made him late.

Hexham Abbey is one of the supreme churches of England. Perhaps the most exciting thing in it is the low, solid, carved, stone seat, known as the Fridstol or Peace Chair, brought here in the seventh century. Four crosses stood at four entrances to Hexham to guide

the fugitive, and once he reached this sanctuary he was safe whatever his offense.

The next most exciting thing is a wide, very much worn stone night-staircase leading up to a high balcony, which was used by the monks to reach the dormitory. I have never seen it without being reminded of the staircase down which Lady Macbeth walked in her sleep. Under the floor of the aisle is a Saxon crypt, built of Roman stones, still bearing their original carving and inscription. The north transept is supposed to be the most perfect example of thirteenth-century architecture in the country.

The road to the Wall follows the north Tyne, a broad, shallow, tree-fringed river full of excellent fish, as the anglers who stay at the "George" Inn at Chollerford well know.

Just by the five-arched, gray stone bridge that spans the Tyne at Chollerford is Humshaugh[3] station, the best place to start your walk of the Wall if you come by train.

A few hundred yards westward on the south side of the road is the park known as the Chesters. In this park is the Roman military station of Cilurnum, the largest fort on the Wall. It occupies four and a half acres. Here, scattered about and carefully railed off, are the remains of gateways, streets, barracks and law-courts; and beyond, on the banks of the Tyne, are the great baths with seven round-arched arbors and fragments of the bridge that the Romans built over the river, the village for the womenfolk and the temples to Mithras and other gods.

In the museum at the gates are collected small rec-

tangular carved altars dedicated to the old gods and to the woodland and river gods; a memorial to his young dead wife by Nobilianus; an inscribed stone by the first cohort of the Aquitanians, and another by the first cohort of the Batavians; carvings of stags being hunted with prongs, a lion's claw, a sun-dial, a pine-cone, a dog, and curiously carved boards on which the soldiers played a sort of draughts.

Almost immediately after the Chesters, the Roman Wall joins the road, but invisibly, because here the road is built on top of it. On the north side, however, you can see the V-shaped grass ditch which is about 35 feet wide and 10 feet deep, running parallel along the fields. It disappears when we get to the crags because it is no longer necessary there. On the south side of the road is the vallum, another similar ditch.

I stopped a little way on to look at a farm in the middle of a field; the end wall was turreted and the thick oak door studded with vast iron nails.[4] The farmer's wife, Mrs. Ord, gave me such a warm welcome that I felt as if I were an expected guest, instead of a foreign trespasser. She not only showed me two of these ancient heavy doors, strong enough to withstand any medieval form of attack, but she also produced a polished blackthorn stick, and when, as she suggested, I pulled one end and she the other, a narrow, long, vicious, sharp dagger remained in her hand. She was in the middle of making a cake to send out to Canada, and she insisted on my eating a slice of her son's very rich birthday cake.

Soon after leaving this farm, which is called Tower Tie, I came to the top of a hill the view from which is both unexpected and stupendous. You look north over

an unending undulating light brown moorland, grazing-ground for cattle and sheep, with no roads and no tracks, just a few unprotected gray farmsteads, and here and there a fragment of a wall—not the Roman Wall, of course.

Westward you look out over the track of the great Wall itself, a black snake-like thing that wanders on and on, switch-back fashion, over the crests and down the sides of about a dozen hills that never rise above 1,200 feet, but present a steep basalt rock face to the north, and on the south slope gently over pasture land to the valley of the South Tyne.

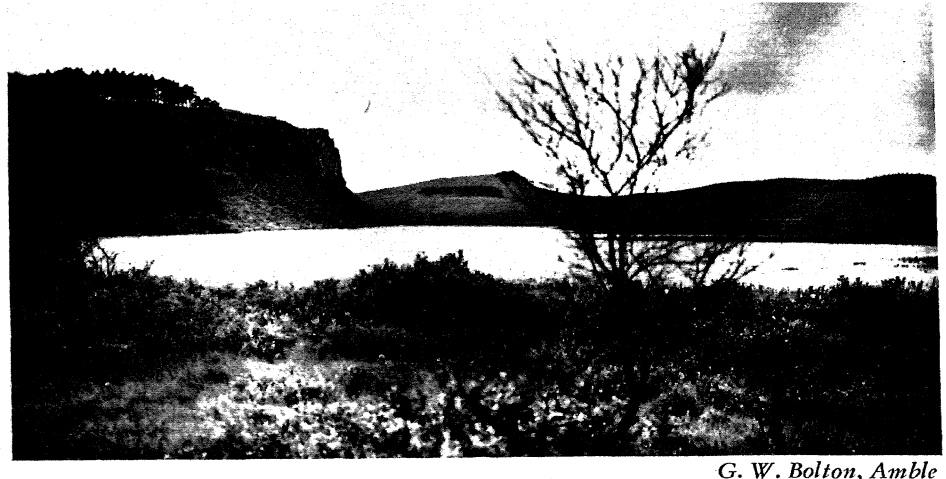
But it is about three miles further on that the road leaves the Wall and the real walk begins. It was only when I deserted the road for the hard, frozen, rough going of the fields under the Wall that I realized my mistake in electing to go this way. Usually I walk from east to west in order to keep the sun on my face, but this is not a rule to be followed when it also means fighting one's way in the teeth of an ice-cold gale. But there was no help for it now. There had been no wind at Newcastle, but the wind was "snell" as I tacked to and fro over the upward slopes on towards Sewingshields. I can't pretend that I enjoyed it. I hated it. I sang to myself the song that the Roman soldiers used to sing as they fought these gales and paced these walls. The words are Kipling's, the tune my own:

"When I left Rome for Lalage's sake
By the Legions' Road to Rimini,
She vowed her heart was mine to take
With me and my shield to Rimini—



ROTHBURY

G. W. Bolton, Amble



CRAG LOUGH

G. W. Bolton, Amble

And I've tramped Britain and I've tramped Gaul,
And the Pontic shore where the snowflakes fall
As white as the neck of Lalage—
As cold as the heart of Lalage!
And I've lost Britain and I've lost Gaul,
And I've lost Rome, and worst of all,
I've lost Lalage."

I did indeed feel very doleful and lonely, and it seemed an interminable way to the black wood and gray farm ahead that is built entirely of stones from the Roman Wall. This is Sewingshields, and in a vast cavern under its crags King Arthur and Queen Guinevere and all their court and hounds sleep under a spell until some one shall free them by blowing the bugle that lies there, and then with the Sword of the Stone cut the garter that lies by its side.[5] I let them lie. I felt that they were happier where they were. They were at least warm. I was not warm. I sang. I ran. I threw my arms about. But the wind penetrated to my bones.

Beyond Sewingshields, I climbed still higher to the crag edge whence I looked down on the frozen mere of Broomlee Lough, a desolate pool in mid-moor. Hundreds of feet below me, right at my feet, under the great crags, I saw a trapper and his boy at work. I wanted to trail them like a hunter, but I was so cold and wretched that I stayed less than ten seconds.

Then I ran on wildly down the side of the Wall, hoping (quite vainly) that it would protect me, howling at some black cattle; up the other side of the never-ending switchback, down through a wood, past the tiny grass amphitheater where the Romans once sprawled

and wrestled; and so to the cup above which lies the fort of Borcovicus. Here the Wall, which up to then had been a wall of stone cubes, a foot each way, suddenly became wide enough to walk on, eight feet wide with a grassy top in which many rabbits had burrowed. There are foxes' earths in the clitters below.

I climbed into Borcovicus, but I was so cold that I couldn't take in properly the significance of those marks in the stone of the gateway made by the Roman chariot wheels, or the fact that the ruts here are exactly the same distance apart as they are at Pompeii—4 feet 6½ inches.[6] Hurriedly I ran through all four massive gateways, up and down past the thirteen barracks, the ironworks, store-houses, temples, carved statues, and the round stone tank which was one sheet of solid ice. The caretaker watched me running from the door of the farm below. He showed no desire to join me. He waited long enough to see that I was honest enough to pay my running fee of *6d.* and disappeared. Even the dwellers on the Wall found it cold. Chesters is more or less protected. Borcovicus is on the exposed hillside. As a soldier I should have avoided the Borcovicus section of the line in winter.

At the end of every Roman mile, that is, every 1,000 yards along the Wall there is a mile-castle, a rectangular fort 20 yards by 25, with gates to north and south, and a street with barracks, baking-oven and stairs leading up to the top of the Wall. Sentry-groups used to occupy turrets of about nine square yards with a hearth and a ladder, three men resting, while the fourth kept watch. I know these mile-castles well, but I was in no mood to tarry on them now. Always in the past I have walked

on the top of the Wall. Oddly enough I had my first seizure of sciatica actually on the Wall here, but now I cringed under it, ran like an escaping convict, all shriveled up, towards Hotbank, but even that once sunny slope belied its name.

From the hilltop here I looked across the gully to Crag Lough, the loveliest of all the places on the Wall —a tiny lake at the foot of precipitous, black, smooth crags with a steep wood growing at one end, and strange, withered shrubs at the edge of the frozen mere. In the middle, a dozen white birds had found a tiny patch of unfrozen water to swim in. From a distance I thought they were gulls. When I climbed the crags and peered carefully through the trees, I saw that they were wild swans. I kept deathly still, but about four brace of wild duck [7] and a curlew rose from the marshes, and the swans lost their unruffled dignity, so I knew that my presence had been detected.

If I had dallied anywhere I should have dallied here, for these Northumberland loughs, Greenlee Lough, Broomlee Lough and Crag Lough below the high crags on the open moor are very lovely, but I was too cold to take in the pronunciation of places; I was too cold even to proceed. On and on into the west, endlessly, undeviatingly up and down the interminable hills ran the black Wall; but it was not Wall I wanted but whisky.

The sight of the white-washed "Twice-Brewed" (and thrice-blessed) Inn far off on the southern road was too much for me. I deserted the Wall. I ran towards the inn fast over the fields. I drank my whisky neat.

On my way to Bardon Mill I passed my third and

last Roman station of the day, Vindolanda, which occupies about 3¼ acres, a pleasant, great rectangle, lying snugly at the junction of two burns, a long way to the south of the Wall, completely protected from all winds. That's the station I should have wangled. The only Roman milestone still standing in Britain is just here.[8]

As I was going along a green cart-track towards Vindolanda, I was strangely moved by the sight of a blackened, broken, round stone column—a Roman altar—standing in solitary grandeur by the side of the grass, dedicated to an unknown god. I found myself envying the warrior whose faith had inspired him to this act of devotion at what was to him so obviously the Ultima Thule of his life's journey. Even Rome knew no wilder outpost.

On Friday morning I again asked the maid who called me if there was any wind.

"No more than yesterday," she said, laughing. "It's quiet enough."

At nine o'clock I caught the Glasgow bus in the Haymarket. At half-past ten after stopping only twice, and crossing a high grouse-moor as wild as and very like that above Culloden at Forres, I arrived at Otterburn, a gray, lonely hamlet in the middle of the moor below the Cheviots. Like Sir Philip Sidney I always find my heart stirred more than with a trumpet by the old song of Percy and Douglas. All ballads are lovely, but none more so than those of Chevy Chase and the Battle of Otterburn. But no white lion pennons of England, nor bleeding heart standards of the Douglas shone for me over these desolate fields above the burn. An icy blizzard from the hills obliterated almost everything except the

semi-circular stone seat that commemorates that dire August night of 1388, when Harry Hotspur fell prisoner to Hugh Montgomery, and the Douglas was buried under the bracken.

I ran for shelter to the "Percy Arms" opposite the ancient Tower of the Umfravilles, and I was allowed to drink my whisky in front of the kitchen fire. That's the second time I've mentioned whisky. I really am very sorry to keep on harping like this on drink. But the truth is that I was cold and I had to get warm.[9] I don't want you to get a wrong impression of this country. I've known it when it was too hot to walk, and when you go you'll probably find it sweltering.

Anyway, one of the maids suggested that I ought to see Otterburn Mill.[10] As the mill was indoors and the blizzard was out of doors, I consented.

All the morning I had been noticing the lovely long fleece of the Northumbrian sheep. Now I saw what happens to it between the time that it leaves their backs and covers yours in the shape of scarf or blanket. It is a long and complicated process which appears to consist mainly of passing the fleece over cylinders armed with vicious steel teeth of all sizes which pull it through savagely. This is described as teasing the wool, a rather euphemistic term, I thought, but in point of fact some of this teasing is so delicate that real teasels are used for the purpose. The machines used are like those used to print newspapers, only, of course, on a smaller scale. The wool is then combed and twisted like a girl's hair and wound by a cylinder horizontally to make the warp. I was corrected for calling the perpendicular

threading, woof. It is called weft. I was also corrected when I suggested that the hand-weaving gave better results than the machine. They use both at Otterburn and I was assured that the machines produce just as good results.

I had to hire a car from Otterburn to Rothbury, but it was worth it, because at Elsdon I saw something that brought home to me the history of this warlike county much more forcibly than the rain-swept fields of Otterburn. This was the fortified rectory,[11] a grim, Norman Border tower, bailey or pele castle with turrets, overlooking a burn, on the other side of which was a green mound, the Mote Hill, where in very ancient times justice was meted out and criminals punished. The church, like the Scots kirks, had a bell-turret instead of a tower. There are indeed many reminders of Scotland hereabouts. The employees in the Otterburn Mill are nearly all Scots. The scenery is Scots. I passed an inn called "The Highlander."

Beyond Elsdon I drove over the moor to the winding valley of the Coquet, a river famous for its scenery as well as for its fish. Rothbury is an odd place. It has a race course; it is the terminus of a railway; the clans once fought out a feud in the church, and it is the home of Lord Armstrong, whose rhododendrons make as good a show as those at Heaven's Gate, Longleat. But to me it will be forever memorable for the "County" Hotel, where at 12.15 without any warning or fuss I was provided with hot soup, a hot lamb cutlet and a delicious pancake while I was waiting for the bus. Also considerable quantities of whisky. At one o'clock I caught the bus for Newcastle. It was, I noticed, an

Edinburgh one—a final example of Scotland's insidious attempt to conquer England.

On each journey I seem to have some queer experience. The chef at the hotel by some odd process found out who I was, and asked if I would go and see him. He was gray-haired, very (what is strangely called) level-headed, and a native of Oxford. Remember these facts, please. This is what he said:

"While you were giving your talk a week or two back on King Arthur and his Knights, do you know I saw them as plain as I see you, with their pennons flying and white heads shining?"

"But I never said a word about white heads shining," I interrupted.

"Anyhow that's how I saw them in and out among the trees, and this very morning while I was busy with my pots and pans I saw them again as shining as before. I didn't say anything to any one. Any one'd think I'd been drinking. Well?"

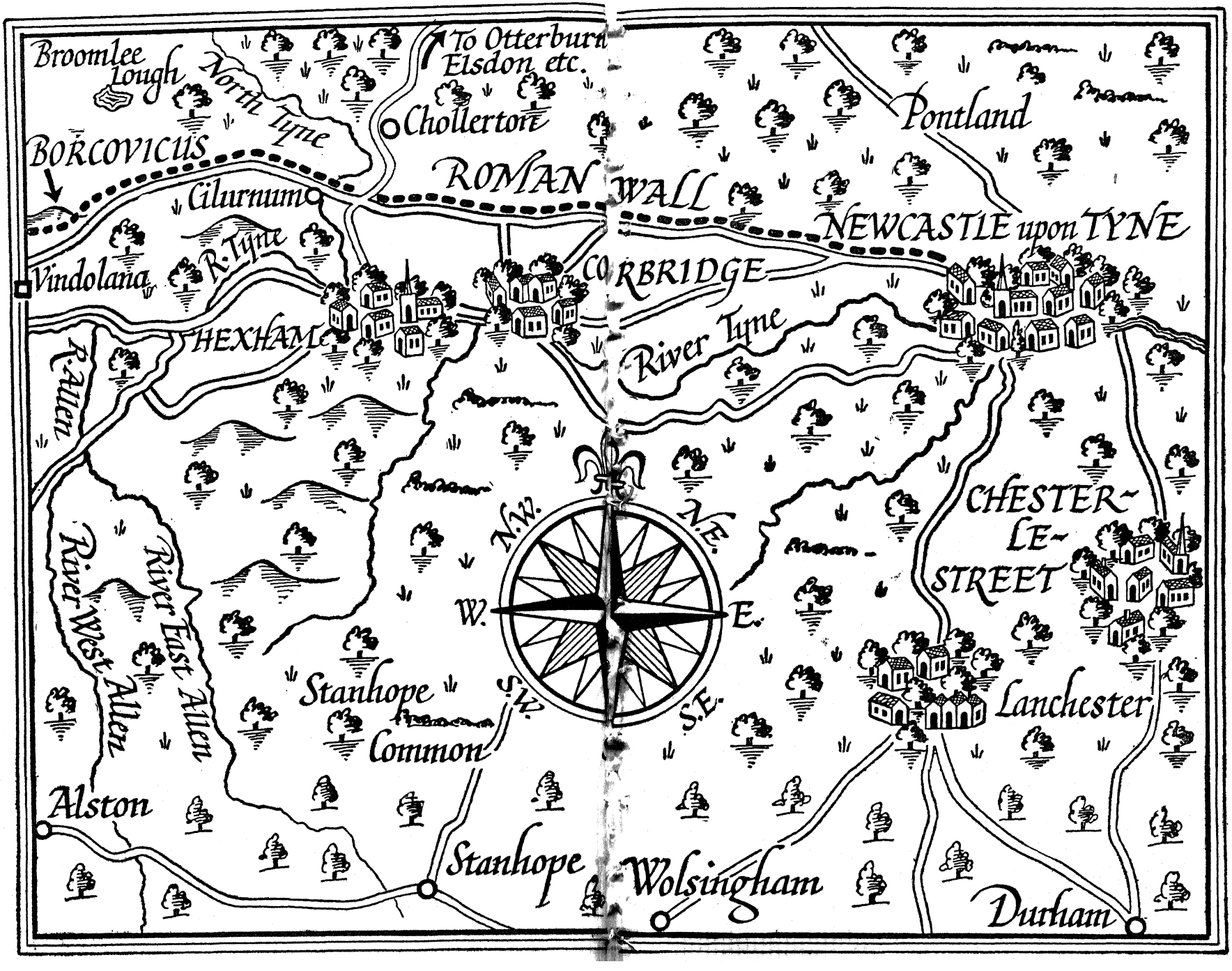
He obviously expected me to say something. I didn't tell him that exactly at the moment he saw them that day I was fighting my way over their spell-bound bodies in the cave at Sewingshields. I wasn't going to encourage him. He wasn't a Celt. As he was born at Oxford I could only assure him, in the words of Sir Thomas Browne, that "Such questionings, if not beyond all conjecture, can only admit of a wide solution."

That is the only way to talk to Oxford men.

"Was King Arthur ever on the Roman Wall?" once asked a famous author? "Was Bamburgh the Joyous Garde of Lancelot?"

I do not know, but if, as seems possible, King Arthur

refuses to desert Newcastle and still finds it fun to sleep under the Roman Wall, I for one don't blame him. It's glorious when it isn't cold—and even when it is cold it's glorious, so long as you walk with the wind at your back.[12]


Broomlee Lough
North Tyne
To Otterburn Elsdon etc.
Chollerton
Pontland
BORCOVICUS
ROMAN WALL
Cilurnum
NEWCASTLE upon TYNE
R. Tyne
Vindolana
CORBRIDGE
HEXHAM
River Tyne
R. Allen
N.W.
N.E.
W.
E.
S.W.
S.E.
CHESTER-LE-STREET
River West Allen
River East Allen
Stanhope Common
Lanchester
Alston
Stanhope
Wolsingham
Durham

6. CORNWALL

I *CAME* to Tintagel over the moors by way of St. Neot.

The early Saints, led by faith, and la Belle Yseult, led by love, came by sea from Ireland, but today you will scan the horizon in vain for any sign of approaching sails. The modern ship gives this North Cornish coast a wide berth. From Padstow Point to Hartland Light is a watery grave by day or night. But there are compensations for coming overland.

St. Neot, for example, which is a higgledy-piggledy village of gray granite cottages dotted about on the steep hillsides above the winding and wooded valley of the St. Neot River. This was the home of that strange dwarf, St. Neot, elder brother, or uncle, of King Alfred, who settled here in the ninth century and performed many miracles. He used to stand up to his neck in water in his holy well and recite the Psalms. This well contained three fish, and as long as the Saint limited his desires to one of these each day, the supply never failed. The pound in which he compelled the crows to sit still during service on Sundays is still to be seen, and in the fifteen fourteenth-century stained-glass windows of the church these and other incidents of his life are commemorated in the most lively manner.

Only one other church in these islands has any glass comparable with it, and that is Fairford in Gloucestershire. So vivid and so varied are the faces of the actors in these scenes—the twenty young women who gave one window, all kneeling in a row, and twenty almost as youthful kneeling wives who gave another, are particularly attractive—and so full of detail are the ships and castles and landscape behind the figures that to wander round this church is like re-reading Chaucer in an illuminated manuscript. The whole rich, riotous, colorful spirit of the Middle Ages is here.

On no account ever pass a Cornish village church without looking inside. Their slender granite pillars, wagon-roofs, rood-screens, and tall towers are nearly all of outstanding grace, but St. Neot is the richest and rarest of them all by reason of its windows.

After leaving St. Neot I climbed out of the combe with its high-banked hedges and fields of red cattle and red plowland, on to the treeless uplands, and almost at once got a view of the wide waste of Bodmin Moor, with the Atlantic on two sides of me, the English Channel on the third, and Dartmoor on the fourth. Here in a quite unprotected part of the open moor, about 900 feet above sea level, lies Cornwall's only lake,[1] Dozmare, into which Sir Belvedere threw Excalibur. On windy nights you can still hear the shrieks of the tormented ghost of John Tregeagle as he flees from the hell-hounds towards the sanctuary of Roche Rock. This unjust steward was condemned to drain the pool dry with a limpet-shell with a hole in it, and if he rests for a single moment he is tormented and chased by devils. At certain times a horse-drawn coach rises out of the

water, and at the bottom of the whirlpool the souls of the evil spend Eternity spinning ropes of sand.

I have seen Dozmare look very grim, and I have known people who refuse to go near it at night, but now it was in genial mood; duck were swimming on its surface contentedly, geese were rustling in the reeds, an old woman was swilling out a bucket on the far side, a bullock was capering gayly up and down, a man, plowing up the black peat, was whistling, and in the cottage on the shore a young mother was singing to her baby.

On the horizon I thought I saw a whole field of riders coming towards me, but I looked again and found it was a prehistoric stone circle. All stone circles on the moor look like people, maidens turned to stone for dancing on Sunday and so on, and there are stone circles everywhere. Dozmare is supposed to be bottomless. I interrupted the young mother's song to ask her how deep it was. "Four feet," [2] she answered abruptly, and returned to her singing. It was unnecessary to ask her whether she believed in pixies. Most of us in the West Country do, but you'll find it difficult to make us confess it. We're a secretive race, very sensitive and superstitious and easily misunderstood.

Dozmare's depth may defy conjecture, but it is more than a mile round and neither fills nor empties any streams. It does not do to hold in scorn the legends that concern this pool. Stand on its brink some wild night at midnight and listen—or, for the matter of that, look. And yet it is only a mile or so to the south of the main London-to-Penzance road (try not to call it "Penzarnce," please).

I crossed this road at the "Jamaica" Inn, Bolventor, where I had an enoromus tea for ninepence. I then followed the rough track behind the inn. After a mile or so it stopped altogether on the open moor, not a preserved grouse moor—the only birds I put up all day were a solitary curlew and a solitary snipe—but a free moor where shaggy cattle and shaggy ponies browse on the dead yellow cotton-grass among the heather and whortleberry bushes that lie between great granite bowlders which are all covered with gray lichen. The gorse was in full bloom.

After climbing Catshole Tor I looked across a wide gully to the thin, long, craggy ridge of Cornwall's highest hill, Brown Willy. It is nothing of a height—only 1,375 feet—but from its topmost cairn you can see as far as Somerset on a clear day. It was very hot. I wore no coat all day. I pined for a bathe. But it was gray, and a haze hung over the sea in front.

There are no tracks across this moor and there are fearful stories of men and cattle being swallowed up by the bogs, about which I should like more authentic information,[3] for I have yet to find a bog in the Duchy in any way comparable with the Dartmoor bogs. But if you want to be safe follow the marks in the peat of horses' hoofs and hounds' feet. Not only is their way the safest, but it is also the best. There were recent traces of hounds on the very top of Brown Willy, and I followed them all the way along the ridge and then down and across the steep gully that separates this hill from Rough Tor (pronounced "Rowter") which is slightly less high than Brown Willy, but far, far grander, for on its summit are two peaks of huge,

smooth, elliptical granite rocks, one on top of another, like a pile of titanic pancakes. I found them far too slippery to climb in my old shooting boots, so I had to discard them for my socks. When I got to the top I saw below me two midget horsemen riding across the moor, two mountainous pyramids of white china-clay refuse-dumps, a good many cattle and, on the eastern ridge, two girls and a dog walking towards me.

When we met they told me that they were looking for the ruins of the old church of St. Michael on the summit. The idea of dedicating hilltop churches to St. Michael (you remember Glastonbury?) is that the Archangel defends his own from the powers of the air. These girls were wandering without maps, without compasses, without coats and without watches. It was that kind of a day—one could. These are glorious moors to scramble about on, full of green pixy-rings, hut-circles, kistvaens, barrows, stone-circles, logan-stones and tors.

It is altogether fitting that a part of the moors should be known as King Arthur's Downs. At Slaughter Bridge, a few miles further north, I passed the place where Arthur is supposed to have received his death-wound.

However that may be—and, anyway, it was the scene of a great battle in 823 betwen the Devonian Saxons and the Cornish—nobody questions the fact that if Arthur was born at all he was born at Tintagel,[4] which is only four miles further on. It is customary to be rude about the village of Tintagel—Trevena is its real name—but I like it. It is a long, straggling street of gray stone, slate-roofed houses, some as old as the time of Richard II, with dormer windows, standing stark and treeless among the fields above the sea, with a dark

church-tower and a massive hotel rising above the headland as landmark and seamark for I don't know how many miles. But roses were in full bloom on the walls and hydrangeas and fuchsias grew in all the gardens.

It was the manager of the hotel who told me of King Arthur's Hall. I had never even heard of it. I went out immediately in search of it, and found in the very heart of the village a vast building in course of construction, which is to be the meeting-place, or temple of the Order of the Knights of the Round Table—a Society of people of all ages who wish, by their personal actions, to prove that the age of chivalry is not dead. This temple—which is quite dark at one end and dazzlingly bright at the other—is to hold a thousand knights. Children under fourteen are enrolled as Searchers. Practically every child in the village wears a Searcher's badge. Every one over fourteen has a probationary year as a Pilgrim. There appear to be no qualifications beyond a determination to help the weak and to right the wrong. Knighthood is conferred on those who perform specifically knightly deeds. It is an excellent idea for any one who hasn't lost the thrill of pageantry and needs a constant spur to live up to his (or her) ideal.

I went in the fast-fading light down the steep lane that leads to the beach and the foot of the ancient castle of Tintagel. Recent falls of rock have so far increased the distance between the fortress on the mainland and the rocky island on which the castle itself stood, that it would now be difficult to throw a cricket-ball across the breach that was once spanned by a drawbridge of long elm trees.

I had forgotten how beautiful the Cornish sea is.

Since my last visit I have seen beauty in many lands, but I have not been surprised into something very like a sob or gasp of delight anywhere else. These smooth, clear depths of peridot and aquamarine in the soft light of an English dusk, and that dim, jagged line of jutting-out shadows of cliffs fading into the nothingness of night will not easily be erased from my memory. Add to this most serene of sights that most soothing of sounds, the soft lapping of the gently-heaving water as it covered and uncovered the rocks outside Merlin's Cave with no more motion than that of a sleeping baby, and do you wonder that I was spellbound?

It isn't, of course, often like this. When the west wind blows, the sea ceases to be the strong vassal at his master's gate sobbing like a drunken giant in his sleep. It becomes a raging, merciless tyrant, as the torn and scarred rocks so grimly testify. The gravestones in the churchyard have to be propped up against the force of this wind, and the tamarisks and beeches all lean heavily over to the east to escape its full fury. The odd thing is that so much of the thirteenth-century fortress wall and watch tower, standing as they do on the exposed headland, should still remain.

The island itself is a magic place. You know, of course, that it disappears entirely twice a year, and that Arthur still haunts it in the form of a chough. It is difficult to avoid peopling the island again with those strange ghosts who will be forever associated with it: Gorlois, the mighty Duke of Tintagel, who lost his life and his wife, the fair Igraine, to Uther Pendragon, who thus became the father of Arthur; the jealous Mark, the lovelorn Tristram; the two Yseults—Yseult the

Fair and Yseult of the White Hand; the whole gathering of the Round Table. How near they come, these timid wraiths, when you sit still and alone on the edge of the island looking out over the empty sea!

The next morning I went over to renew acquaintance with Port Isaac (pronounced "Izzic" [5]) before breakfast—a fishing village that changes but little with the years. There were the same old fishing-boats lying at the ends of immensely long ropes, nets drying on the walls, fishermen waiting for I know not what, complaining that it wasn't worth going out, with fish fetching the price it does; the same incredibly narrow alleyways, the same strident gulls each perched on its pet chimney-pot or mast—the Port Isaac gulls have a peculiar note of their own; another generation, looking just the same, of black-eyed and often red-haired children climbing out of the narrow combe to school, with snowdrops in their hands.

The only thing that was different was the harbor. In the old days there was no harbor. There were two, or perhaps three, life-boats, but no harbor, and still in wild weather I don't know how they make it. You will see these Port Isaac fishermen at Cowes, for the great racing yachts are all manned with crews from Cornish villages—a placid relaxation after the severity of their life on this coast.

After breakfast I was driven over in the hotel van to Boscastle in order that a fellow-guest, Captain Turton, who knows this country intimately, should show me what he calls the finest sea cliff walk in Britain.

It was pleasant to be driving once more over roads where one met only jingles, farmers on moor ponies,

drovers sauntering along in front of their cattle and an occasional road-mender. I like the way that Cornish farms have their names on the white gates: Trevear, Tresungers, Tregeargate, Polwithen. How attractive all Cornish place-names are: Trevisquite, St. Anthony in Roseland, Menheniot, Lanteglos[6] and Egloskayle!

Boscastle is the most beautiful harbor in these islands. Two valleys converge on to this narrow water, which has an S-shaped twist and lies below high hills, so that you cannot see the open sea until you climb its cliffs, and even then the harbor-mouth is protected by St. Meachard's Island. You get a wholly false impression of this lovely place if you come to it by the main road. At all costs—for first impressions are important—descend its steep street by the old road, which passes many yellow-washed cob-cottages with stone porches and chapels converted into shops.

For the next two and a half hours I walked almost in a trance along the cliff-edge, scrambling through gorse, in full panoply of gold and bracken, down into combes, climbing over rocks, zigzagging with the coastline which is never two minutes the same. There are islands everywhere—one shaped like a ram's head, another like a saddle, a third like a tin helmet. One of the rocks is exactly like an elephant's trunk; another like the prow of a great ship; another shows the profile of Arthur's face; while a fourth is like a sleeping polar bear. There are sandy coves, a paradise for bathers, on which the white surf breaks like a delicate lace fringe to a garment of crystal-clear azure on the yellow sand. The base of the rocks below the tide-line was tinged with

brightest pink. There were traces of old slate-quarries right at the cliff-edge every half-mile or so.

"There was a time," the Captain said, "when the sea was not so empty of ships. They used to lie off here waiting to run in for their cargo of slate. And then, of course, in earlier days there were the wreckers. You know the custom, of course: they only had to wade into the sea and touch anything to claim possession. They did a lot of wading. Did you ever hear of the two brothers, one of giant strength and weak in the head and the other a tiny, wizened creature of great intelligence? Well, the giant became jealous. One day as the brothers sat together the giant put his finger into the fire, held it there until it was burnt, pulled it out, said: 'If hell-fire's no worse than that the sea'll cool it'; and picking up his brother put him under his arm, waded out to sea with him until they were both drowned."

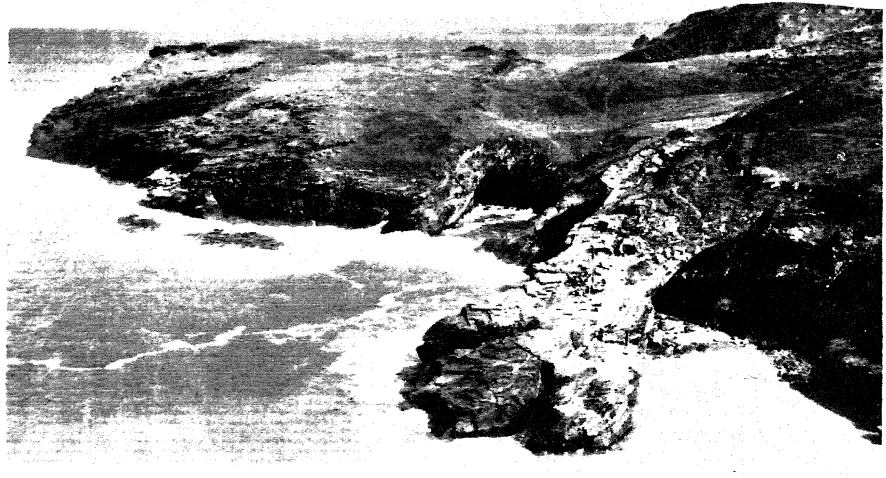
He was full of stories like that. He showed me the place where the last wolf in Cornwall was killed, and wherever a drop of the animal's blood fell reeds have grown ever since. He is an authority on birds. He told me that he had seen a peregrine, bothered for its prey by a carrion-crow, drop its prey, swoop on the crow, kill it, and pick up its prey again before it reached the ground.

We saw no peregrines, but among a crowd of jackdaws and buzzards three choughs [7] were making a muffled noise like a jackdaw with a sore throat and a blanket round it. It is, of course, impossible to see their red feet and red beaks while they're flying. The islands were crowded with chattering gulls of every size, and



KING ARTHUR'S CASTLE, TINTAGEL

Dixon-Scott



BARRAS HEAD, TINTAGEL

Dixon-Scott

shags ingurgitating and regurgitating fish. There were also one or two ravens.

By the courtesy of Mr. Satchell, the Works' Manager, I was taken over the Delabole Slate Quarry, which has been working continuously for four hundred years, and employs four hundred men, who have always been on full time. This quarry is, like Dozmare, over a mile round, but, unlike Dozmare, it is not four feet deep. It is five hundred feet deep, and looks like a giant Stilton. I was put into one of the trolleys and jerked down the incline (which is 1 in 2½) for 1,200 feet and feels like a Swiss funicular.

Coming up again is worse, for you have to lean forward exactly like a runner on his marks.

All around the steep sides are quarrymen, roped like mountaineers on a glacier, hacking away at the slate, which is taken up either by aërial cranes or by the trolleys on which I traveled.

I saw slate sawn; I saw it split into slices 3/16ths of an inch thick; I saw it crushed to the finest flour; and I saw it shaped into what I, in my ignorance, called "tiles." I thought Mr. Satchell would break one over my head.

"These are not *tiles*," he said: "they're *slates*."

Whatever they are, some are gray, some are green; but the loveliest and rarest are covered with iron-mold, a rust deposit of great beauty. They get 10,000 tons of slate out of this quarry every year, and to get that they have to remove 225,000 tons of waste.

I think every man does his own home less than justice. He takes so much for granted, and is more than ordinarily unobservant. I would like you to visit our

West Country not because of what I have said, but because of what I have left unsaid. The richness and diversity of its colors have to be seen to be believed. Its rock scenery completely defies description, and I find that I haven't even said a word about our cream.

Even if we had nothing else to offer you, you'd find it would be worth paying us a visit for the sake of that. Cornish "parsties," Cornish "splits," and Cornish cream —the very mention of them makes one want to go straight back.[8]

THE SONG OF THE WESTERN MEN

A good sword and a trusty hand!
A merry heart and true!
King James's men shall understand
What Cornish lads can do.

And have they fixed the where and when?
And shall Trelawny die?
Here's twenty thousand Cornish men
Will know the reason why!

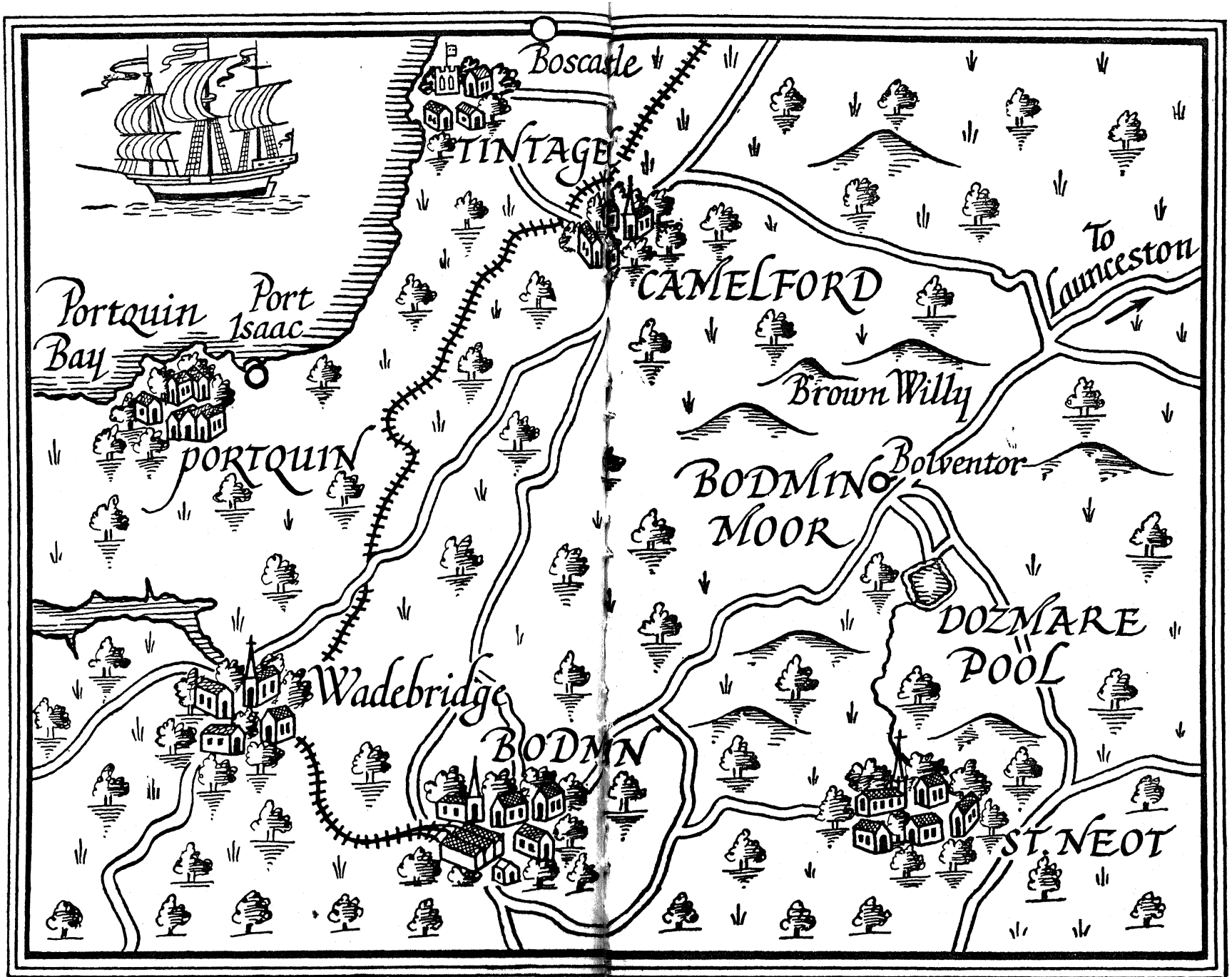
Out spake their captain brave and bold,
A merry wight was he:
"If London tower were Michael's hold,
We'll set Trelawny free!

"We'll cross the Tamar, land to land,
The Severn is no stay,
With 'one and all,' and hand in hand,
And who shall bid us nay?

"And when we come to London Wall,
A pleasant sight to view,
Come forth! come forth, ye cowards all,
Here's men as good as you!

"Trelawny he's in keep and hold,
Trelawny he may die;
But here's twenty thousand Cornish bold,
Will know the reason why!"

R. S. Hawker.


Boscastle
TINTAGEL
CAMELFORD
To Launceston
Portquin Bay
Port Isaac
PORTQUIN
Brown Willy
Bolventor
BODMIN MOOR
DOZMARE POOL
Wadebridge
BODMIN
ST. NEOT

7. LANCASHIRE

HAVE you ever thought of making a tour through Lancashire?

I don't mean Blackpool, although after Brighton, Blackpool is the most alive and most amusing seaside resort I know. I don't mean Blackpool for two reasons. One is that the herding instinct, that drives the majority of people to take their holidays in a mob and share a beach with about ten thousand other people, needs no encouragement. It needs active discouragement, for it is a sign of an unreasonable dread, induced by modern industrial conditions, of being alone. Far too many people are more afraid of finding themselves alone than children are of being left in the dark. That is my first reason for not talking about Blackpool.

It is not because I don't like it. I do. I have a deep affection for Blackpool. For a day's outing or a choir-treat there's no place to touch it.

When I first came down from Oxford[1] I lived for four years within half a dozen miles of it—I was a master at Rossall—and I used to go into Blackpool as often as I could. It was a good change from a classroom. My second reason for not talking about Blackpool is that its hinterland, unlike that of Brighton, is not attractive. The South Downs at the back of Brigh-

ton are the smoothest and most soothing little hills in England, but the region known as the Fylde [2] is not what I should call soothing.

It is, however, a grave mistake to believe that Lancashire is composed wholly of smoke-laden manufacturing towns and a flat coast. It is worth remembering that part of the Lake District—and there is nothing in Europe lovelier than that—lies in Lancashire. Now it is no more part of my job to extol the virtues of the Lakes than it is to extol the virtues of Blackpool. Both are far too well known and well loved to need my recommendation. But there is yet another Lancashire that is very little visited.

Lancashire, you may be surprised to hear, is richer in ancient, honorable county families and in Tudor halls and manor houses than any other county.

When I set out from home Sussex was her usual smiling, warm, sunny self. When I arrived at Wilpshire, about midnight—it's a few miles north of Blackburn—it was cold. When I got out of bed on Wednesday morning at 6.30, only the thought of duty kept me from getting straight back into it again.

I looked out on a vast world of white. The hills seemed to stretch endlessly on every side, and they were all white. An ominous gray smear in the sky to the north where the wind was coming from, portended that at any moment the blizzard might descend and blot out those glorious heights before I could get on to them.

Shortly after seven o'clock I was walking into that bone-chilling wind, along an icy road, in the semi-darkness. There were still stars in the sky, and lights

in the houses. When at last I was overtaken by a bus, I was glad to find it almost full. Spluttering and coughing we managed to keep each other warm. The nuisance was that at every halt the warmed-up contingent of mill-hands and quarrymen would get out and be replaced by others who needed warmth.

In the absence of the conductor, first one and then another tried to shut the open door, but it resisted even the toughest kicks, and when the tiny conductor eventually returned and gently released an invisible catch there was a wild roar of laughter.

So far from taking his pleasure sadly, the Lancastrian takes his sadnesses pleasurably. At Clitheroe a woman got in, quite blue with cold, smiled benignly on us all, and said very loudly:

"They tell me as 'ow it's snowin' in Shang-guy. Well, God 'elp 'em if it's worse nor what it is 'ere."

At Chatburn I got out, and walked on along the white, lonely road (past cottages with the morning paper sticking under the door-knockers), into the northeast wind until I came to Downham, which has been described as the prettiest village in Lancashire. Its ancient gray stone church with fourteenth-century tower stands upon a knoll, with the four-square Tudor hall hidden by sycamores just beyond. This has been the home since 1558 of the Asshetons, upon whom rests the curse that if one of them steps on the grave of Abbot Paslew at Whalley he dies within the year. The hamlet itself is a place of old gabled and mullion-windowed stone cottages, casually dotted about above a black stream, spanned with tiny bridges every thirty or forty yards.

Over the white fields beyond the black woods to the east rises a vast white sleeping mammoth, the great mass of Pendle Hill, looking like Europa's white bull in repose. Just to the north is Rimington, the home of that wonderful hymn-tune that I heard at Haworth, and a mile or so further on is Bolton. Henry VI, after the Battle of Hexham in 1464, was hidden here from the Yorkists for a whole year by Sir Ralph Pudsay before his ultimate betrayal by a Talbot of Waddington. Here, too, is Pudsay's Leap, where William Pudsay, with the aid of a magic bit given him by the fairies, leaped across the Ribble and escaped from his enemies.

But I was in search of witches, not fairies. My object, in spite of the snow and wind, was to climb Pendle, where in James I's time the Lancashire witches held their grand council, and over which I might expect to see Elizabeth Southerns and Anne Whittle, better known as Old Demdike and Old Chattox, riding their broomsticks. If by any chance you haven't yet read Harrison Ainsworth's "Lancashire Witches," get hold of a copy tomorrow. You'll thank me for that advice even if you never visit their home. It will also help you to visualize very vividly the wildness of this scene and the cruelty of those times.

I'm not going to pretend that I enjoyed climbing Pendle in the snow. I didn't. It is less than 2,000 feet high and in ordinary weather probably a pleasurable and easy climb. But (1) I was in the shade; (2) I was not wholly protected from the biting wind, either by the slope of the hill or by the wall up the side of which I made my ascent; and (3) I had chosen the steepest

way up, which meant that I had to traverse to and fro in the snow.

I fell first into a stream, then into a bog, then into long reeds and coarse grass, and ultimately into an odd deposit of black shale: all of course hidden under the snow. This made the climb tricky and disagreeable. The compensation was the view, which every moment became grander, for the sun, hidden from me, shed a soft pink light over the whole of the Ribble Valley below me and the high fells beyond. Heavy white clouds were banked above some distant mountains, and blizzards swept over others, but the whole of the Forest of Bowland [3] stood out dazzlingly white. Clitheroe's fine Norman Castle, standing on an isolated limestone reef in the valley, shone like a fortress of crystal. Only the farms and trees and south sides of the walls were black.

I looked forward to an even finer view on the top, and I also looked forward to a little warmth from the sun. I was disappointed in both. When eventually I scrambled on to the great plateau at the top,[4] I found that I was not only in the sun, I was also in the way of the wind, very much in the way of a most determined wind.

I ran with streaming eyes into it, over very rough, snow-covered bog, hoping to see York Minster one way and Lancaster Castle the other. It was clear enough to see from the North Sea to the Irish Sea, but I had lost all feeling in face and feet and hands. I remember vaguely an immense vista of white hills and black towns, and then I turned from the beacon and ran as fast as I could to find some shelter from this piercing blast. All I wanted was to lose height. I put up a brace of

black-cock: even they flew down wind. I found myself on a steep bed of loose black shale. The angle of descent was far too steep, but nothing would induce me to turn into the wind again. I descended. In other words, I let go.[5]

I had not known that shale could be so hard. It restored my limbs to painful consciousness. I had found out one way of getting warm in a northeast wind—fall down a mountain.

I remember passing an ancient barn. I remember going through a bare wood with trees white on one side and black on the other, and a brook by my side. I remember passing a picturesque sixteenth-century manor house, Little Mearley Hall by name, where the postman was just delivering letters.

And so, after looking back once at Pendle, which was now covered with a whirling blizzard, and shivering at the sight, I came over the frozen fields to Clitheroe, an enchanted city of curving streets set on a hill, very like Rye. It was here that the author of the "Faerie Queene," himself a Lancastrian, met the farmer's daughter, Rose Dynelay, whose face inspired so many of his sonnets, but whose love was not for Edmund Spenser.

The four-square Norman keep has been bought by the town as the Clitheroe War Memorial, a typical Lancastrian gesture of pride and loyalty. The whole country hereabouts teems with interest.

Just a few miles south is Whalley (pronounced Warley). The ruins of the ancient abbey on the banks of the Calder stood up majestically against the background of snow. The last Abbot, John Paslew, was



THE TROUGH OF BOWLAND

E. Pye, Clitheroe



E. Pye, Clitheroe

DOWNHAM VILLAGE, WITH PENDLE HILL IN THE BACKGROUND

hanged, drawn, and quartered for his presumed sympathy with the Pilgrimage of Grace.

The church contains a huge pew like a cage, and some very odd carvings including one of a man shoeing a goose as a punishment for meddling in other people's affairs.

Each village in this neighborhood has its ancient gray stone manor-house or hall, now more often than not used as a farm, full of grim associations with the Pendle witches, the monks of Whalley, the Wars of the Roses, the Jacobite Rebellion, or the days of the Commonwealth. These houses nearly all have a gable on which the proud builder carved his initials and date in the stone, "J.B. 1591," "W.A. 1627," and so on; and their gate-posts are crowned with round stone cannon balls. If Lancashire needs a symbol, she has it here. These houses are not only beautiful. They were built to withstand the tempest, and to last.

That night I met a geologist, who invited me to explore the strange pot-holes of Clapham, natural holes some thirty feet wide descending 300 feet into the ground, and then running into subterranean river-beds of goodness knows how many more hundred feet under the Ribble. I wish I'd met him in the morning. The next time there is a northeast wind of this quality I'm going under, not over the mountains.

The following day the sky was the color of gunmetal. Visibility was almost entirely destroyed by blinding snow.

I set out at eight o'clock down to the valley of the Ribble, that great salmon river which rivals the Thames for width, smiling meadows and deep woods. At Rib-

chester little is left of the once great Roman fort, but there is an 800-year-old church at Stydd, and all the way along close to the roadside I saw more and more of these gaunt halls of great antiquity and dignity. I must have passed twelve in six miles. In the summer one notices the wealth of woods,[6] in the winter the wealth of old houses, laid bare.

And then I came to Stonyhurst, once the home of the Shireburnes, now one of the best of our Public Schools, as it is easily first by virtue of its superb situation above the Ribble and under the lee of Kemple End, a hill shaped like the partially shaved skull of a Red Indian. Its twin green Eagle Towers, its vast avenue, lakes, chapel, great hall, library and museum combine to make this once famous private mansion one of Lancashire's supreme glories.

I here deserted the Ribble for the Hodder Valley, to my mind a much more attractive, because much wilder, river. Its way lies through a narrow gorge with stunted pines on both steep banks. It is very like the Dart. The road winds quite crazily and irresponsibly in and out here, past Bashall Eaves (where King Arthur fought a battle, and the fairies built a stone bridge in a night to help an aged woodcutter to escape from the Pendle witches) to Browsholme Hall,[7] a large and beautiful three-storied, gabled Stuart house in the woods, the home from time immemorial of the Parker family, the hereditary Bowbearers of England, and Master Foresters of Bowland. Here is kept the stirrup through which the feet of every dog had to pass in Norman times before it was allowed to live in the forest. If it

failed to pass, its feet were mutilated so that it could not hunt the deer.

A mile or two beyond Browsholme, after passing Whitewell, a fine stone gabled hotel, a favorite haunt of anglers, the country quite suddenly opens out. There are no more hedges and very few walls. Everywhere there are high fells—Totridge on the west being the finest—but they all lie back from the wide valley of the Hodder.

The road crosses the river twice, over two remarkably fine arched bridges and then, just before Dunsop Bridge, I left the Hodder to follow the stony-bottomed Langden Brook. This is the territory of the Towneleys, whose memorials are to be seen in the tiny Catholic church of Thorneyholme. The scenery again changes quite suddenly, for the hills all close in on the hedgeless road which rises up on a bank of crumbling shale above the valley. It becomes a succession of corners and folds of fresh hills as one climbs to the top of the pass and the county boundary.

It had been my intention to descend to Lancaster to see the horseshoe in the middle of the road that commemorates a visit of John o' Gaunt, but the snow, which had not stopped since I started, was both obliterating the view and making the road impassable. In spite of chains, the car skidded friskily to and fro across the road, stopping, as often as not, on the very edge of the precipitous banks. It was not only the first car that had tried to pass through the Trough of Bowland that morning; it was obviously going to be the last. The question was not could we go forward, but whether we could get back before the road was completely

blocked up. It was a thrilling business, and I was extremely surprised to find myself not at the bottom of the Langden Brook, under the car, but once again safely at the foot of the pass, inside the car.

As a matter of fact, the scenery in this pass or trough is so fine that I was glad to traverse it both ways. In spite of the snow I could occasionally see the whole range of the fells, and longed for the time to come when I could wander about on them without being cut in half by the wind or lost in the snow.

I had to retreat before these storms, but I'm going back. If you buy the inch to the mile Ordinance Map No. 25 you'll see why.

This Forest of Bowland is almost virgin soil for the walker. It's exactly like the Lake District without the lakes, and though I agree that water adds enormously to the charm of scenery, the compensation here is that you will be walking where no one else ever walks. And to keep the balance even between Lancashire and Yorkshire, I'm going to keep on the county boundary all the way, from Lower Bentham in the north over Burn Moor, Great Harlow, Bottom Head, Wolfhole Crag, Whins Brow, Hawthornthwaite and Fair Snape, to Whitewell.

I shall be above 1,500 feet most of the way and on every side have vistas of other fells. Here are 200 square miles of open moorland of the easiest possible walking, and all within five hours of London.

But I'm not sure that I didn't see this country under the best conditions. Snow and wind suit these mighty fells and these austere Tudor solid stone manors and halls. It is a solitary country, best seen in solitude. A

land such as this, of constant war and feud and outlawry, is best appreciated when it is in its most savage mood. As I saw it, I could well imagine the shrieks of the witches as they were hauled up the Trough to die at Lancaster, and the terror of the foresters of Bowland as they saw the armed retainers of Sir Adam of Clitheroe come to steal the King's venison and maim any who withstood them. A cruel, austere, but a very awe-inspiring land.

In summer probably the motors frighten both the warlocks and the fairies away, and the trees hide or soften the austerity of the ancient houses, but nothing can destroy the majesty of the contours of the fells, and it is these, after all, that we come primarily to see and climb.[8]

On the next page you will see how little the Lancastrian has changed in three hundred years. Even in Elizabeth's reign the Lancashire lad and lass had captured the affection of all England.

Ye lusty lasses then in Lancashire that dwell;
For beauty that are said to bear away the bell;
Your country's hornpipe ye so mincingly that tread,
As ye the egg-pie love and apple cherry red.

DRAYTON, *Polyolbion,* XXVII, 65

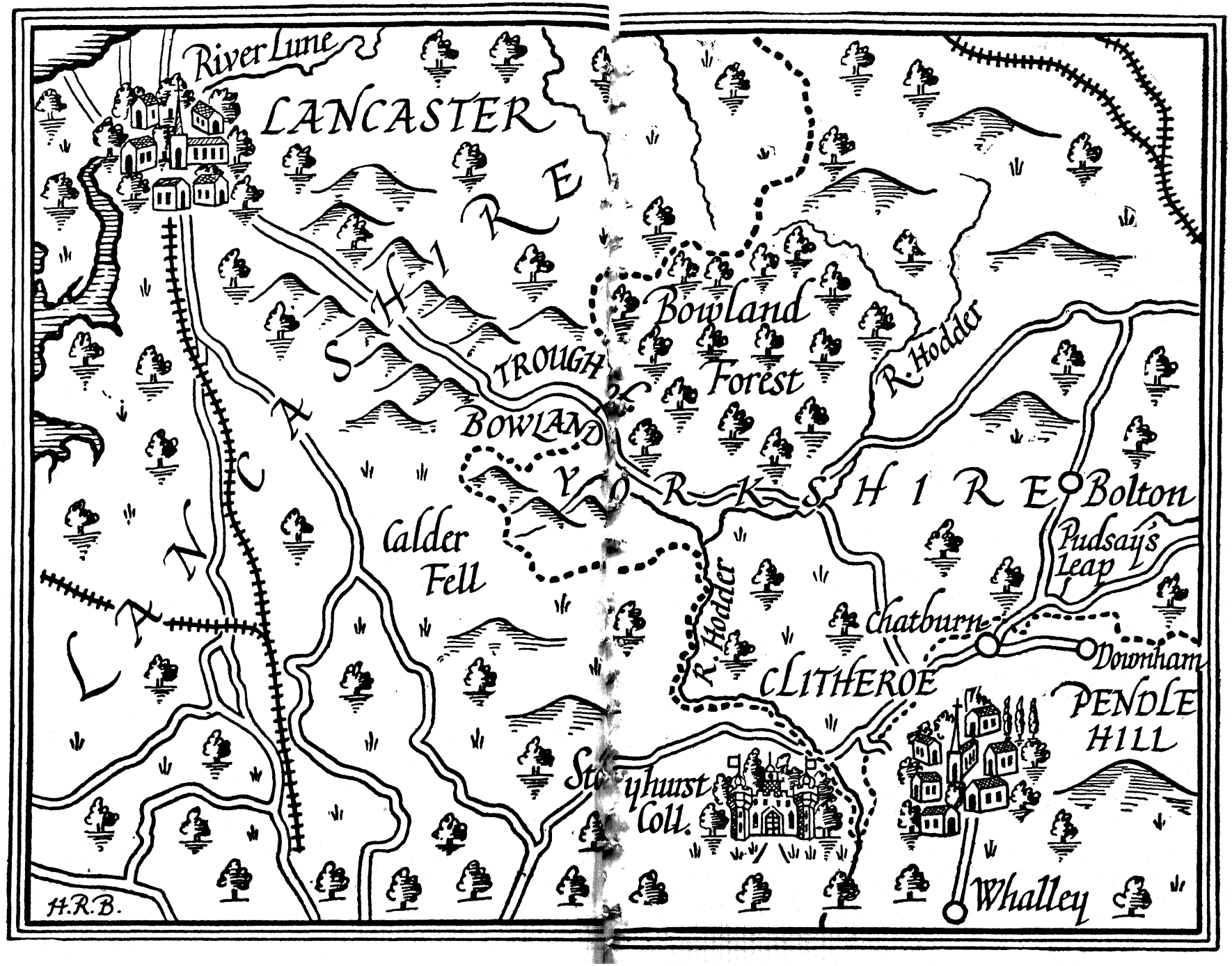
"Fair Women" doth belong to Lancashire again.

DRAYTON, *Polyolbion,* XXIII.

Maria.

Were I yet unmarried, free to choose
Through all the tribes of men I would take Petruchio
In's shirt with one ten groats to pay the priest,
Before the best man living or the ablest,
That e'er leap'd out of Lancashire—and they are right ones.

FLETCHER, *The Woman's Prize,* I, 3.


River Lune
LANCASTER
SHIRE
LANCA
Bowland
Forest
TROUGH
BOWLAND
R. Hodder
YORKSHIRE
Bolton
Calder
Fell
Pudsay's
Leap
R. Hodder
Chatburn
Downham
CLITHEROE
PENDLE
HILL
Stonyhurst
Coll.
Whalley
H.R.B.

8. NORFOLK

THOSE who have been led by Anthony Trollope and Hugh Walpole into thinking of cathedral cities as sleepy, unenterprising places should visit Norwich. They will be surprised.

Norwich is exactly like Rouen, a higgledy-piggledy medley of very old and very new; a city of red-brick, smoking factory chimneys and tall, gray, flint church towers; of medieval alleyways and dark courtyards abutting on wide, gayly-lit streets; of row upon row of tarpaulin-covered market-stalls where men eat cockles, and girls buy silk stockings, and the wares vary from daffodils and oranges to lumps of horse-flesh.[1]

It is a city of busy men and smartly-dressed women, fair of face and, more often than not, red of hair. Packing mustard and making shoes seem to agree with them.

I was told on my arrival at the "Maid's Head" (a gabled inn that was built in 1287, and now is centrally heated) that it would take me two days to see Norwich, so I decided to see Norfolk first.

A mile or two along the Newmarket road I came to an ancient oak, bearing the inscription: "Kett's Oak, 1549." Robert Kett, a Wymondham tanner, led the Norfolk peasants to protest against the enclosing of the common lands and to plead for the free education of

the poor. For this, after putting up a sturdy fight for seven weeks, his troop of reformers was butchered by German mercenaries and he was hanged from the castle walls.

Wymondham (pronounced Windham) has a very lofty church of gray flint with two towers, one square, the other octagonal. It was the first time I'd ever seen a church with two towers.[2] Close by is Kimberley, a great house and park where the Wodehouse family have lived since Agincourt.

I very soon found what Norfolk is like. It is an undulating well-wooded, well-tilled land of red-brick farms, and big plows. Each red-brick village has a gray flint fifteenth-century church, and a large park full of trees, in the middle of which stands a Tudor or Jacobean manor or castle.

The Flemish weavers who, in the fourteenth century, brought such prosperity to Norwich also brought prosperity to the countryside. In those days it must have been even richer than the Cotswolds. It is not poor now. I passed flock after flock of long-fleeced sheep and many sturdy cattle. The blue wagons were so heavily weighed down under their bags of flour that they all had three horses to draw them. Plowmen were busy in the fields everywhere, and the gulls were busy in the wake of the plow. I felt more than ever that I was in Normandy, except for one thing; the roads, though excellent, wind as an English road should. On the main roads I felt as if I were on a gentle switchback. Every now and again I passed signs to "Unbridged Ford" (a reminder that there are twelve rivers



A NORFOLK WINDMILL

Judges Ltd.



CASTLE ACRE *Times photo.*

in the county), and to "By-roads." A by-road in Norfolk is a muddy cul-de-sac ending in a farm.

Just before reaching East Dereham, exactly at the turning to Dumpling Green where George Borrow was born, I passed two caravan-loads of gypsies. They were the only gypsies I saw in Norfolk. I hoped that they were going to pay their respects to his memory, and I half opened my mouth to ask them, but I decided to preserve the illusion and refrained. I've tried my Romany on gypsies before.

Dereham church, like Wymondham, has two towers, in one of which French prisoners-of-war were housed during the Napoleonic war.

The verger, who was wearing a house-painter's overall over a postman's uniform, knew nothing of George Borrow, but he showed me the memorial window to William Cowper, who was described by Borrow as our "sweetest and most pious bard." This window shows the poet (in his night-cap surrounded by his dogs and tame hares) in his study with hollyhocks growing outside the window.

What the verger failed to show me, and I had to find for myself, was an odd-looking rock-garden in the churchward, with very dirty water in it. On the stone I read this inscription:

"The ruins of a tomb which contained the remains of Withburga, youngest daughter of Anna, King of the East Angles, who died A.D. 654. The Abbot and Monks of Ely stole this precious relic and translated it to Ely Cathedral A.D. 974."

Apparently the Abbot decoyed the Dereham people to a feast while the monks stole the body of the virgin

saint. They were pursued, but got away by boat. Three hundred years later they opened the coffin, and found her as fresh as ever, and still so bashful at being looked at by men that she blushed when one of the monks touched her cheeks. The holy well of curative water still gushes up 1,400 years after her death. There was a polyanthus in full flower on its banks.

At the "King's Head" I did not expect any talk about St. Withburga, but I half hoped to find some traces of George Borrow. There were none. The mantelpiece was occupied by a silver cup won at bowls.[8] The conversation ran on the superiority of this game to cricket. I disagreed and left.

Dereham has no need to live on its past, even though that past contains one of our purest poets, one of our most robust prose-writers, and a miracle-working East Anglian saint. It is a handsome and prosperous red-brick market town, but by no means as quiet as "Lavengro" might lead you to believe. The county takes its note from its capital city. It is beautiful but busy. I found the lanes just as full of farm traffic as the main roads. As I made my way along the narrow, winding maze of switchback tracks I passed more and more well-loaded wagons and healthy livestock.

Then I came to the valley of the tiny River Nar, on which stands Castle Acre.

At first I only saw the usual gigantic, gray flint church and tall tower standing in mid-field a little above the meadows, and then a wide street of red-brick houses with corrugated brick tiles. But as I came into the street I saw opposite the inn a massive Norman gateway like that at Rye.

I congratulated the girl who brought me my bread and cheese and beer on having the sense to stay in the healthy country instead of working in the towns.

"I don't," she said, "I work in Northampton. Only Mother's got 'flu."

The whole of Norfolk had 'flu that week. There was a printed notice up in Castle Acre to the effect that any one appearing in a public place with an infectious disease would be fined £5. If anybody had taken any notice of that order there would have been nobody about at all. Practically every one I met was either just going to bed with influenza or had just got out of bed after it.

The great feature of Castle Acre is the west front of the ruined Priory, the most beautiful fragment of late Norman arcading in the country. The brown-eyed guide who showed me over, waxed very lyrical with his learned talk of corbel and capital. He even occasionally broke into Latin, and I was immensely interested in his "*Lavatorium necessarium*," which I suppose roughly means that even monks were compelled to wash occasionally. But he was a good guide. I got a very good picture of the strange assortment of pilgrims who came from afar, along the ancient Peddar's or Ickneild way to see the sacred relic of St. Philip's arm. The Priory is now mainly grass courts and gray bits of wall out of which wallflowers grow, but it retains in its west front a succession of pillars and arches that are of rare beauty.

The country then entirely changed, for at Massingham Heath, on my way to the north coast, I came on a fine open space of dead bracken and heather and gorse

in full bloom. There was a tang of salt in the wind.

My next stopping place was Burnham Thorpe, where Nelson's father was rector for forty-six years, and Nelson himself was born. This village is exactly like the Puddle villages of Dorset, a tiny hamlet on the side of a stream among the meadows. The church stands by itself, away from the cottages, in the middle of a field close by a large barn. Its war memorial commemorates nine killed; four bore the same name of Futter. Nelson's own bust stands above the graves of his father and mother. On his father's grave are written only these words: "The grave of the Reverend Edmund Nelson, rector of this parish." No date is given.

Just over the fields lie the great woods of Holkham, the Earl of Leicester's estate, the home of gray geese and black-headed gulls—the best partridge shoot in England. It is within sound but not sight of the sea, for there are thick woods on the landward side of the road-banks.

At Wells I got my first view of the sea, far away over miles of sands. First there is a tiny creek and quay where the barge "Rosalyne" of London was lying up, then I walked out along the sea-wall for a mile, with the winding creek below, and miles of bird-haunted marshes and sand-dunes on either side. In front of me I could hear the roar of the breakers, but could see only miles of sand and a few stray cockle-gatherers. Then I came to a protected nook among the sand-hills, full of bathing huts. Behind the sand-dunes were woods of pine and silver birch. Wells is the Le Touquet of England, but much freer and lovelier than Le Touquet, with none of the artificiality of that town.

A mile or two further on in a protected valley I found a pure gem of a village. Its name is Stiffkey, but I believe it is pronounced Stewky. From all its long line of red cottage-chimneys above the tidal river rose a column of blue smoke. It was just tea-time. The old Hall, built by Sir Nicholas Bacon in 1579, has six circular towers and two embrasured towers—even in this county a house of exceptional beauty. It was for sale. If I had £4,000 I should buy this Hall and live at Stiffkey. I have seldom seen a village to which I have so quickly lost my heart.

The river winds in and out among the meadows and so out to sea just before Blakeney, another very striking village of houses scattered on rising-ground facing the salt marshes, with a picturesque harbor at the end of a creek, a large hotel on the quay, and a fine church standing on a knoll (the third I had seen with two towers that day), the tiny one at the east end, which was once a beacon or lighthouse, sticking up exactly like a cat's tail.

Cley (pronounced Cly), which adjoins Blakeney, was once a flourishing port, but the harbor became silted up. The sea plays odd pranks here. Thirty-five years ago it broke through the narrow hills, and the villagers had to be rescued from their bedroom windows in boats.

I turned inland at Cley to see Blickling Hall, a Jacobean, Dutch-gabled, red-brick house of great beauty, standing at the end of a broad walk of thick, clipped yew, down which the ghost of Anne Boleyn, who spent her childhood here, drives on the anniversary of her execution in a coach with four headless horses, driven

by a headless coachman. Her father's ghost, by way of yearly penance, has to cross forty county bridges in a night pursued by the hell-hounds of the marshes.

The next day I set out to explore the Broads. Just beyond Neatishead I took a by-lane which ended abruptly at the edge of a narrow channel, where light-brown reeds stood high in the water and others that had been cut were drying. A flat-bottomed, reed-cutter's boat came silently into view. A man walked towards me from a boat-house, and when I asked him what reeds were used for, demanded where I came from. He was uncertain whether I was an escaped lunatic or an income-tax assessor. He then jumped to the conclusion that I must be a school-inspector and therefore completely witless, but comparatively harmless. Having explained patiently that reeds were used for thatching he went on quickly to emphasize how bad trade was, how 'flu had seized all his family and his men, how necessary it was for reeds to be thoroughly dry, and how the cutting began in December and finished in March. He also showed me some gigantic pikes' heads hanging like murderers' skulls from a wall, and also the bodies of bream that the pike had tried in vain to swallow.

From Barton Broad I went across to the "Pleasure Boat" Inn at Hickling Broad. Here I got my first clear view of a Broad. It is a shallow sheet of water with amber-colored reeds growing in and round its edges, and woods of birch, elder and fir behind. Its capacity for hiding itself among the meadows and woods is astonishing. There were wild-duck, gulls and any number of coot swimming about, though I was told at the

Inn that the annual coot-shoot was only just over, when a couple of dozen guns in punts accounted for nine hundred or so. "They make better eating than partridges," said a fat man in a fisherman's blue jersey.

The landscape is immensely improved by a number of black tower windmills which are here used for draining the marshes and do not grind corn. I counted eight from Wayford Bridge and six at Potter Heigham. On Ormesby and Rollesby Broads I saw two or three men fishing from boats, and on the River Thurne I saw one wherry under sail. Otherwise the Broads at this time of year are left to the birds and the reed-cutters.[4]

The best sight I saw on that day was at Caister, where there is not only a glorious stretch of sand and the open sea full of slim, black, thin-funneled Yarmouth trawlers, but also the ruins of one of the most impressive red-brick castles I have ever seen. This is Caister Castle, built by Sir John Fastolf after coming home from Agincourt in 1443, and taken over by the Pastons. It is entirely surrounded by a wide moat, and the high, round, five-storied tower is now hollow, open to the sky, and populated entirely by pigeons, whose feathers, eggs, nests and droppings lie inches deep on the few stone stairs that are left.

I returned to Norwich by way of Mousehold Heath, a stretch of heather-covered common where cavalry exercise, and where there still stands (to let) the white post-mill that Crome painted. Reëntering the city I went first to Willow Lane to see the tiny house where Borrow lived, hidden under an arch in a courtyard. It is like Dr. Johnson's house in Lichfield, full of small, paneled, dark rooms, among them Captain Borrow's

bedroom and George Borrow's tiny, sloping attic overlooking the chimney-pots. It is so well tucked away that two people in the lane of whom I asked the way had never heard of it. The caretaker was in the throes of 'flu.

In the Guildhall I saw the sword (whose heft is of ivory and mother-of-pearl, sheath of silver and snake skin, and blade of Toledo steel) that Nelson took from a Spanish admiral.

In the dark castle dungeon I saw rude carvings on the walls of coats of arms and Virgin and child, made by the prisoners; casts of the heads of twenty Norwich murderers, all of them with smiling lips and high brows; the iron-toothed prong that was forced into the mouths of witches and scolds; the ducking-stool in which they used to be bound and ducked (a fearful instrument of torture this); and a bit of the actual scalp still sticking to the inside of the cage from which the skull of the last murderer was suspended from the castle wall. Norwich, like Rouen, reminds one of medieval brutality no less than medieval beauty.

Owing to the ravages of 'flu I had the Cathedral and the Castle entirely to myself for over two hours. But what impressed me most was not the exquisite town mansions of the medieval merchant-princes and heroes of Agincourt, or even the fifteenth-century flint churches, of which there are fifty or sixty, but the long list of Norwich worthies. At the Grammar School I saw the place where Nelson, George Borrow, and Rajah Brooke of Sarawak were educated. At Earlham (you've read Percy Lubbock's book of that name, of course) I saw the home of the Gurneys and Elizabeth Fry; in

St. Peter Mancroft the monument of Sir Thomas Browne; in St. George in Colegate the grave of Crome, the weaver's son, who with Cotman, the silk mercer's son, made Norwich the center of English landscape painting; and in a small plot of grass outside the Cathedral, known as Life's Green, lies the grave of Nurse Cavell.

"All England," said Thomas Fuller in the sixteenth century, "may be carved out of Norfolk."

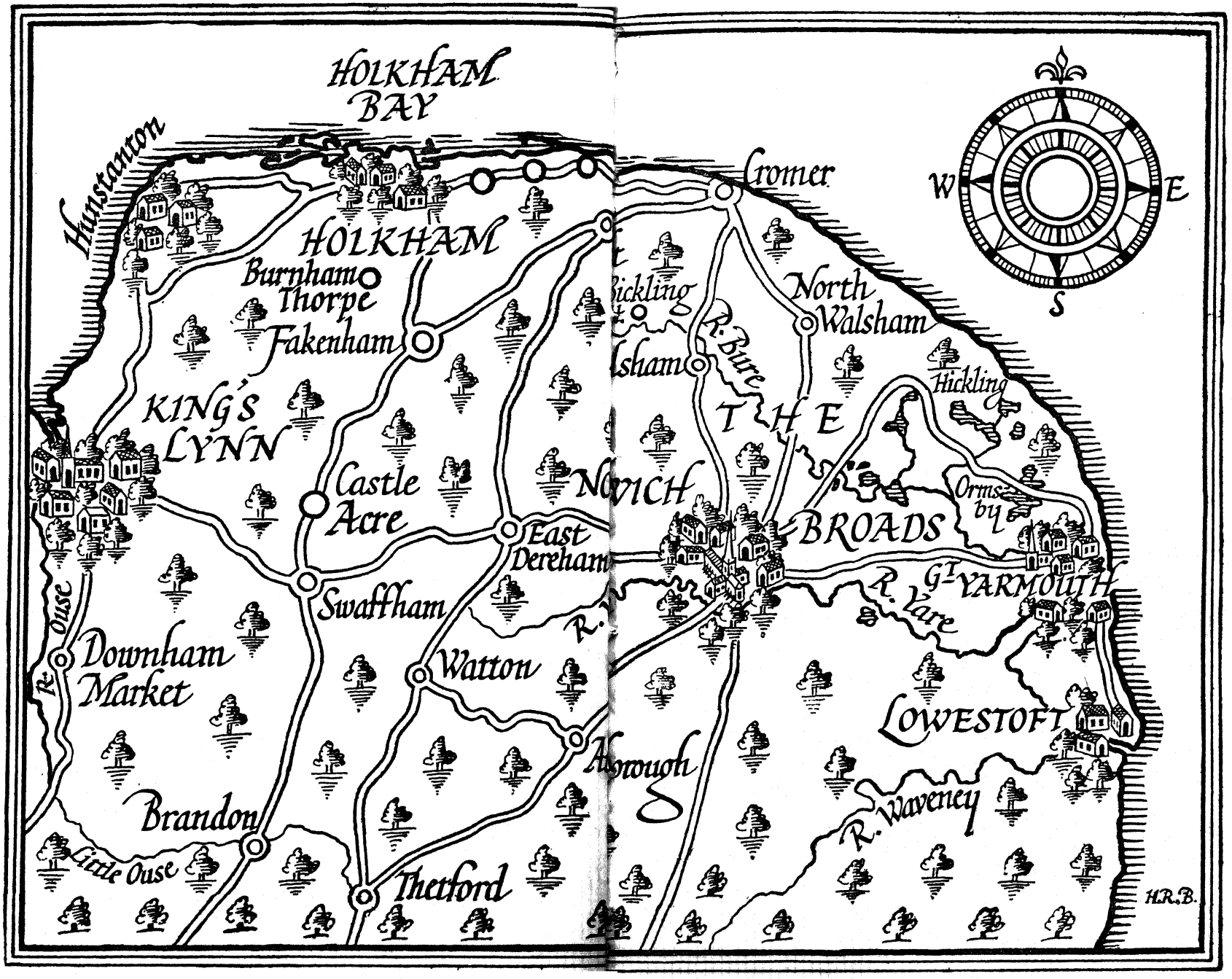
It still may.

On the next page I have given a few proverbs of this county taken from Lean's *Collectanea*, a delightfully amusing and encyclopædic collection of folklore and local sayings. At Wells for instance, as you see, they used to bite the fingers off corpses to obtain their rings.

Cromer crabs,
Runton dabs,
Beeston babies,
Sheringham ladies,
Weybourne witches,
Salthouse ditches.
And the Blakeney people
Stand on the steeple,
And crack hazelnuts
With a five-farthing beetle.

Blakeney bulldogs,
Marston dodmen,
Binham bulls,
Stiffkey trolls,
Wells bitefinger.

Halvergate hares, Reedham rats,
Southwood swine and Cantley cats,
Acle asses, Moulton mules,
Beighton bears and Freethorpe fools.


HOLKHAM BAY
Hunstanton
HOLKHAM
Burnham Thorpe
Fakenham
KING'S LYNN
Castle Acre
East Dereham
Swaffham
Downham Market
R. Ouse
Watton
Brandon
Little Ouse
Thetford
Cromer
North Walsham
R. Bure
Hickling
THE BROADS
Norwich
Orms by
Gt YARMOUTH
R. Yare
LOWESTOFT
R. Waveney
W
E
S
H.R.B.

9. THE WELSH MARCHES

"Happy is the eye
Between Severn and Wye,
But thrice happy he
Between Severn and Clee."

HAPPINESS is not the first word that I should have associated with the Welsh Marches, the once turbulent Border that has so many ruined castles that every valley seems to be an almost continuous fortified wall, and every high hill a natural rampart. Happiness is not the first word that one associates with the novels of Mary Webb or the poems of A. E. Housman, though both were inspired by this part of Shropshire. And yet behind the grandeur of the jagged and the loneliness of the smooth hills, behind the ruins of once grim fortresses on my journey between Severn and Clee last week I found many signs of happiness and heard more sighs of serenity than of unrest.

When we left Alberbury—the birthplace of old Parr, who lived happily to the age of 152—there was white rime on the vicarage lawn, and as we drove through Shrewsbury [1] the fog was so thick that we had to have our lights on.

I take it that you know Shrewsbury, the proud town of magpie-colored, half-timbered houses that stands high above, and is almost surrounded by the Severn. Not to know Shrewsbury argues a misspent life.

A mile or two to the south we turned up a narrow lane to a red-brick farm where the vicar, my host, led

by Augustus, his sheep-dog, guided me through the mist to the edge of a tree-fringed, frozen lake. There was, of course, nothing to see but white fog, but I could hear the whir of many wings overhead, the cries of startled wild-duck in front and the thin tinkle of ice cracking.

Gradually I discerned strange, black figures of birds walking on the surface of the mere, and vague, dark indications of overhanging trees. It was an odd will-o'-the-wispish mist, for it lifted for about five seconds, revealing a lemon-yellow sun and the outline of more trees on the further shore. Then all was once more obliterated.

"I'm sorry," said the vicar. "This is Mary Webb's 'Sarn.' You remember it in 'Precious Bane.' I should like you to have seen it."

"I have seen it," I said.

There was, of course, no paigle or cowslip, nor was it thrice girdled with circles of trees and rushes and lilies, but the flapping of the wings and the cries of the restless, invisible wild-fowl under that mantle of mist contrived to make this eerie pool more mysterious than even Mary Webb made it, though certainly not so sinister.

As she lived in this neighborhood we went to see three of her homes, the one on Lyth Hill, a jolly knoll of gorse and heather with a ridge of houses along the top, being a most inappropriate red-roofed bungalow. The other two, at Pontesbury, were less unexpected, though the name of Roseville certainly suited one of them. The third, standing under the hill next door to a byrites quarry—we apparently eat this quarried stone

in our sugar—was more in keeping with one's idea of her. It was here, I believe, that she grew the vegetables that she sold in Shrewsbury market.

In the next village, Minsterley, I saw a most strange sight. From the gallery of the church there project seven thin wooden poles carved at the end into the shape of a heart. On each of these hearts are carved initials and a date—"E.W. 1734, M.M. 1736," and so on. From these poles there hang seven wooden frames or visors covered with lilies and roses and streamers of colored paper. Inside the visors hang white gloves also cut out of paper. These maidens' garlands, as they are called, were carried on the coffins of young unmarried girls and afterwards hung over their pews.[2] They seemed to me an outward and visible sign of the whole content of Mr. Housman's poetic vision.

After leaving Minsterley we turned up along the sides of a steep hill through Snailbeach and, after passing a number of disused lead-mines that had been worked by the Romans, we got out of the car and began climbing a narrow, steep lane hedged with broom, bracken and heather. It was, of course, slippery and frozen, and I could see nothing. It led to an isolated white-washed cottage with a very deep well in the garden. A girl with a shawl over her head came to greet us as we passed. Augustus roused an angry grouse, and a skittish pony.

Up to now we had been completely enveloped in fog, but as we came on to the open moor of the Stiperstones (in Shropshire the letter I is long and Y is short) and got above the 1,600 foot level we suddenly emerged into a highland of blue sky and glorious sunshine. Below us lay a world buried in billows of white cotton-wool and

beyond it and above lay the dim outlines of the cones and peaks and ridges of the Welsh mountains.

In front of us across the black heather and cranberry bushes rose a chain of black quartzite crags along the ridge of the Stiperstones. This hill is exactly like an immense fish lying as fish lie in glass cases, with jagged fins sticking up. One of these fins looked exactly like one of the gray Border castles of the Lords Marchers in the valley below.

But the most impressive is the bridged gap of the Devil's Chair, a sort of high throne in space. You remember how often Mary Webb refers to it in "The Golden Arrow." The Devil only sits in it when it is hidden in a mist. He must have got out of it out of courtesy for our sakes, for the mist was only just below it when we clambered into it and over it. He sits there in the hope of sinking the Stiperstones, for when they sink England will perish. You will be glad to hear that they seemed quite solid under my weight.

After slipping and sliding over a succession of miniature Striding Edges we deserted the Stiperstones ridge, which runs north and south, in order to explore the much longer, but quite smooth ridge of the Long Mynd, which runs parallel to it and at about the same height on the other side of the valley of the East Onny River. To get to it we had to go over a long, gentle slope of bog and rushes which contrived to be both wet and frozen. There were a good many white-faced, large-horned cattle feeding, but after leaving the girl at the cottage we encountered no human being until we were at the bottom of a well-wooded gully on the other side. Here we met a young farm laborer wearing a black

hat, the brim of which was larger than any cardinal's.

At ten minutes to two we arrived at the "Horse Shoe" Inn at Bridges to find to our horror that in this district they close at one o'clock. This is how the local licensing authorities contrive to attract visitors.[8]

Luckily the vicar's man who had driven round in order to meet us there had already ordered our bread and cheese and beer, so we were not defrauded of our lawful desire to eat and drink.

Afterwards we drove up a narrow bracken-covered ravine past the hamlet of Ratlinghope (pronounced Rattrup) to Upper Durnford Farm. As there were eleven gates to open in less than a mile, and as the deep ruts were carelessly filled in with loose, sharp stones, I was not surprised to find that the fifteen-year-old boy at the farm left his egg half-eaten to inspect a motor car capable of coping with so sinister a track, while his father asked the vicar to use his influence to bring a steam-roller up here. This farm was cut off so long from the outer world during the last heavy fall of snow that they were reduced to burning their furniture for fuel. A parson of Woolstaston on the other side of the hill, on his way back from taking service at Ratlinghope, was lost, some sixty-five years ago, for a day and a night on the snow up here and only just escaped with his life.

Soon after leaving the farm we were on the top of the Long Mynd, which is neither narrow nor craggy like the Stiperstones, but immensely broad and smooth, and seems to go on forever. It is an unpreserved grouse-moor of heather and bilberry or whinberry bushes, with little to relieve its unbroken line beyond the crescent-

shaped turf butts and an odd assortment of tall posts. There are two ancient circular barrows known as Robin Hood's Butts, but easily the most interesting feature of the moor is the ancient green track known as the Port Way which makes the Long Mynd look as if it were parting its hair in the middle.

This track was just broad enough to hold the car until we reached the Boiling Well, a favorite bivouac for the bilberry pickers. Here we got out and watched the car disappear down the Devil's Mouth towards Church Stretton. The Devil's Mouth seemed to be well named, for the whole side of that ravine was scarred and blackened by a devastating heath fire, the white smoke of which was far denser than the valley fog. A few puny, black figures, running about with flails, were trying to beat down the evil tongues of flame which kept maliciously licking up more and more of the heather. Its frontage was so wide that it looked like an attack along a wide front under a huge barrage. Beautiful and awe-inspiring, but wasteful.

Just below the tall post that marks the summit (1,700 feet) only a few feet higher than the general level of the moor, we passed an isolated house faced and roofed with green corrugated iron. Towards it, along the green track, came a mother and small daughter heavily laden with parcels. Except for one horseman and those distant fire-fighters they were the only people we met on the top all day.

As we went on our way south the track gradually narrowed to the width of a footpath for one, and on our left we passed a long succession of very deep combes which are here called batches and hollows.

At last the mountain itself tapered and we got a superb view away to the west over the dim pasture-land of Shropshire below to the high mountains of Central Wales in the blue mist behind the sinking sun.

Then the ridge quite suddenly came to an end and with it the heather. We ran down a gentle, smooth, downland slope on which long-tailed sheep and shaggy ponies were browsing. Below us lay the winding valley of the Onny, with the dense woods of Plowden rising on the other side. At the tiny station of Plowden an angry old woman asked whether we had permission to park our car in the yard, so I didn't add to her troubles by asking for a ticket to Ludlow as I had intended, but drove on to Marshbrook where the porter was more kindly.[4]

I spent that night at the "Feathers" Hotel, Ludlow, a three-gabled, three-storied black and white half-timbered Tudor inn with windows of leaded glaze and highly ornate barge-boards, and carvings everywhere. The paneled dining-room has magnificent moldings on the ceiling with the Royal Arms of James I in the center.

As the man whom I had hired to drive me had not arrived by nine o'clock the next morning I went to fetch him, and found him at breakfast. His young wife, who has the lovely Christian name of Alda, was reading "A Shropshire Lad."

"What do you think of Mary Webb?" I asked.

"Not much," she said.

I have a feeling that the future will endorse her judgment in preferring Housman.

Our first stopping-place on Friday was Stokesay, a twelfth-century castle in an almost perfect state of

preservation standing in a hollow above a large farm-pond and next door to a Norman church in a valley of apple orchards hemmed in by two wooded hills, Norton Camp and Yeo Ridge, once inhabited by two giants who shared a treasure chest concealed under the castle. The gossamer-like blue veil of mist that hung over it made one's senses ache at its loveliness.

I would give much to be able to make you see it as I saw it. First at the end of the churchyard I came to a broad, dry moat filled with a medley of bulrushes, beehives and planted vegetables. On the further side rose a high, circular wall of defense. On the east stands an isolated, gabled, seventeenth-century black and white gatehouse of two stories, built on a foundation of stone, very heavily decorated with carved timber even to the four dragon beams which support it on all its four overhanging sides. I passed under this, through the huge oak gates into the great grass court where yellow crocuses and snowdrops were growing and pigeons were strutting about proudly.

The gray shingled roof of the castle opposite was full of chattering starlings. It is in so complete a state of preservation that I expected to see sentinels in the battlements and wimpled ladies smiling from the orieled windows.

I first went into the banqueting hall, a four-gabled, thirteenth-century, lofty chamber with magnificent arched beams, black with the smoke of log fires, resting on stone corbels, huge traceried windows and a very early, solid oak staircase with smooth, original hand-rail leading to the ladies' chamber. On the north side of the hall is the old stone tower with narrow, slit

windows built in 1115, with one story added in 1240, and a timber overhanging upper chamber on top of that, added in Jacobean days. On the south side of the hall is a perfectly paneled solar or drawing-room, and beyond that is the thirteenth-century, double octagon tower with a stone staircase, built in the thickness of the walls, and hinged shutters on the battlements for the archers.

From these battlements I looked down across the moat to the frozen pond, round which the farm ducks were waddling in a vain search for water, and watched a brightly-painted wagon with a load of black branches of pollarded trees lumbering on its way through the farm, and listened to doves cooing happily on the gray shingled roof of the hall below. A soothing, happy sight and sound. I could only wonder how the girl whose ghost for so long has wandered up and down the stairs of the gatehouse could tear herself away. They say that the fact that she no longer walks is a proof that she is happy at last. I wonder! If this had been my home I should have haunted it forever, for I propose to haunt only the places where I have been most happy.

The church is only less interesting than the castle, for it has covered-in, high horse-box pews, and very ancient hard benches, specially designed so that you avoid the fleas by putting your toes on the bench behind.

At Aston-on-Clun, a mile or two westward, we saw a tree in the village garlanded with about thirty flags. A bride of this village left money that her happiness should be thus eternally commemorated, and the flags are renewed every 29th of May.

Just beyond the "Hundred House of Purslow" Inn

at Clunton, we left the valley of the Clun and turned up a steep, narrow lane of deep ruts over a running brook that was completley frozen over, in order to see Bury Ditches, earthworks of three circles of ramparts standing 1,287 feet up, the place where, perhaps, Caractacus made his last stand against the Romans. It is a "ghosty" place of newly-planted firs and old gray trunks of blasted beeches and elms. From it I looked down on the fields of Bishop's Castle and the high hills of Radnorshire.

A winding narrow, green lane brought us to Clun, where stand the ruins of that grim border castle known as the Castle of Garde Doloureuse of Sir Walter Scott. There is a picturesque old hump-backed, five-arched, stone bridge over the river Clun, and the church, which has a stout Norman tower with pyramid timber top, built obviously for defense, was as gayly decked with flags as the Aston tree. Everybody knows the jingling couplet:

"Clunton and Clunbury, Clungunford [5] *and Clun*
Are the sleepiest places under the sun."

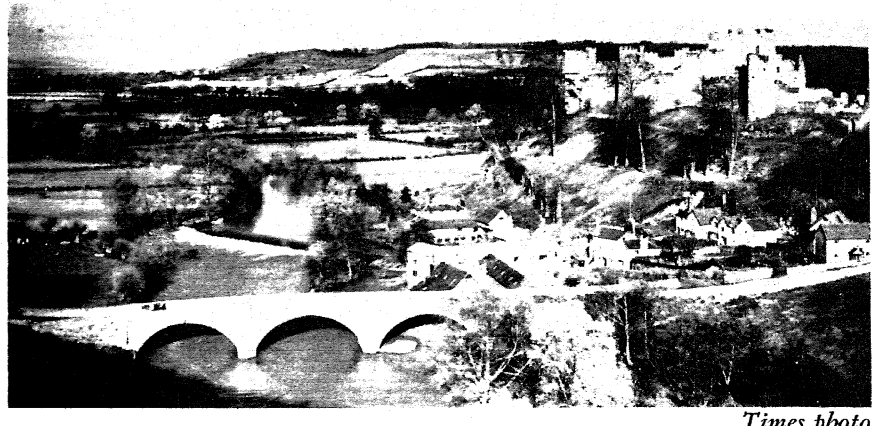
That may or may not be true, but the Clun War Memorial contains so gigantic a list of her dead that one realizes that when she wakes she wakes to some purpose. This War Memorial is another very vivid reminder of "A Shropshire Lad."

"It dawns in Asia, tombstones show
And Shropshire names are read;
And the Nile spills his overflow
Beside the Severn's dead."



LOOKING NORTHWEST FROM THE WREKIN

The peaks in the background include Aran Mawddwy and Aran Benllyn about 47 miles from the Wrekin



LUDLOW CASTLE

Times photo.

In the inn (which also closed at one o'clock) I made some comment to a farmer about the pleasant taste of the small Kerry sheep and the unpleasant effect of the east wind. "Aye," he replied, "and nothin' good never came to us out of the east, neither," which is not the retort of one who sleeps.

The road from Clun to Knighton is a switchback between peaks. I meant to walk across by way of Offa's Dyke, but if I had I should have missed the last inn in England, the "Stag's Head," at New Invention.

There's a good place-name for you. This is a glorious bit of country for place-names.

England Shelve, Argoed, Purlogue and Medlicott are examples. A poet in "Punch" discovered this recently:

"*And oh! I'm filled with yearnings*
To tramp it down the slope
That takes you past Five Turnings
And leads to Lurking Hope:
Or, best of all, go roaming
Beside the tiny beck
To where it falls a-foaming
At Water-break-its-neck.

A country must be jolly
(On that I'll bet my shirt)
Where brooks are labelled Folly
And mounts are christened Flirt;
It looks, my fellow-rover,
The place for you and me,
So when the winter's over,
We'll journey there and see."

But the countryside is as good as its name. The road down into Knighton runs along the side of a bracken-covered, wooded ravine as lovely as any in England, and Knighton itself is an entrancing gray town, set among high hills in the valley of the Teme. But there's another side to this. There is beauty; there is also brutality. The Teme is the valley of Border castles. First I passed Brampton Bryan which Lady Brilliana Harley successfully held with the aid of the family doctor and Sergeant Hakluyt against the Royalists.[6] Then I scrambled among the ivy-clad, crumbling ruins of Wigmore, the earliest stronghold of the all-powerful Mortimers, in whose veins flowed the royal blood both of England and Wales.

And so at last by way of the sleepy, orchard-embowered villages and winding ways of Leinthall, Elton and Aston and through thick woods I came to the loveliest castle of all, that of Ludlow. The first view of these high gray walls and turrets standing on the hillside above the Teme seen from Whitcliff Hill is one of the grandest in all England.

After crossing the river by an ancient three-arched bridge, I ascended a very steep street through the narrow Broad Gate and so came to the entrance to the castle.

This is indeed a place full of memories, but it wasn't of Milton's "Comus," which was first played here on Michaelmas Eve 300 years ago, or of Butler writing "Hudibras" here, or even of the young princes sheltering here before their uncle took them off to be murdered in the Tower, that I was reminded, but of those earliest days in Henry II's reign, when to live at all was to live dangerously.

As I looked down from the battlements of Mortimer's Tower I thought of those two fair daughters of Joce de Dinan, Sibille and Hawyse, who watched their father below, sore beset by his enemy de Lacy, and his rescue by the eighteen-year-old Fulke Fitzwaren, who, taunted with cowardice by Hawyse, sallied out on a cart-horse in a rusty helmet, brandishing a Danish ax, and so won the hand of the girl who taunted him.

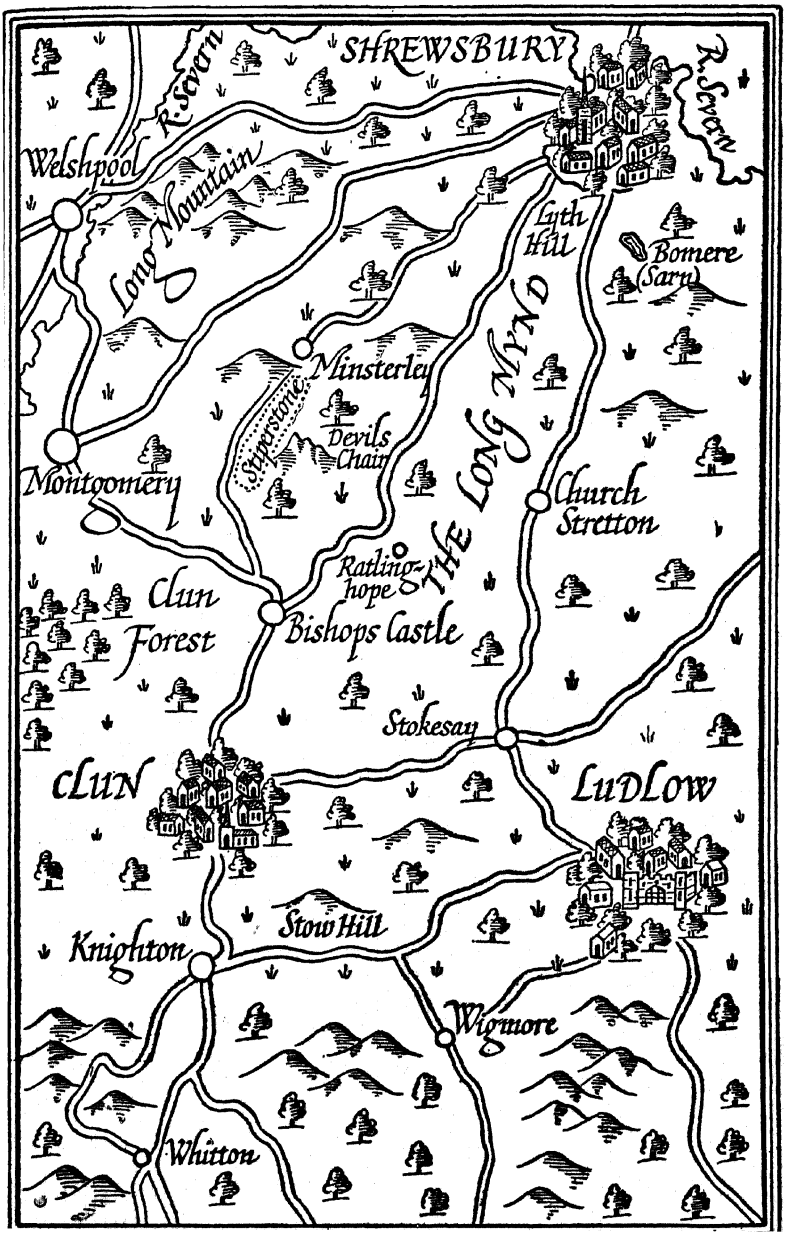
Among the prisoners brought in on this occasion was Arnold de Lisle, upon whom the dark, gentle Marion de la Bruyére took pity to the extent of helping him to escape on a rope of towels and napkins. When Joce and Fulke Fitzwaren and their men went on a foray to Ireland, Marion, in Leland's words "tarried, faining sickness, behind, and wrote a lettre to her love Syr Arnold de Lisle, to cum secretly to her up into the Castel with a ladder of leather and cords." Arnold came according to Marion's desire, and soon after came his band, a thousand strong, and secretly scaling the walls, killed the castellanes in their beds and massacred all the women and children in the town while Marion lay in his arms. Waking at last to their cries she rushed to the window, discovered her lover's treachery, stabbed him with his own sword and threw herself from her chamber window on to the rocks below.

There are many things of peerless beauty in and near Ludlow, the fifteenth-century stained glass in the huge parish church, depicting the Ludlow peddler's adventures with Edward the Confessor's ring, the ornately decorated Reader's House, the parqueted, three-gabled "Feathers," the view from Clee Hill; but none of these stays so clearly in the mind as that vast open green tilt-

yard and those grim, gray battlements, now the playground of jackdaws, from which one looks westward over mountains and wooded valleys once as troubled as that other border where the Percy and the Douglas fell.

For 450 years the Lords Marchers held this land in fee, and for 400 years since their day its beauty has increased, for though the hills retain their contours and the valleys their gentle, tree-fringed streams, the castles and old houses have grown mellow with age. And the glory of Shropshire lies as much in her ancient houses as in her hills. She is prodigally rich in both.

> *"We travelled in the print of olden wars,*
> *Yet all the land was green;*
> *And love we found, and peace,*
> *Where fire and war had been."*


SHREWSBURY
R. Severn
R. Severn
Welshpool
Long Mountain
Lyth Hill
Bomere (Sarn)
Minsterley
Stiperstone
Devils Chair
THE LONG MYND
Montgomery
Church Stretton
Ratlinghope
Clun Forest
Bishops Castle
Stokesay
CLUN
LUDLOW
Stow Hill
Knighton
Wigmore
Whitton

10. THE YORKSHIRE FELLS AND DALES

OWING to the kindness of the headmaster of Windermere Grammar School, I was taken, last week, over what I believe to be the wildest part of England, the high fells and long dales of the North Riding of Yorkshire.

When we left Windermere I found myself looking back with regret to the snow-capped peaks of Langdale Pikes when I ought to have been looking at the unknown, smooth ridge of the Pennine Mountains that lay ahead.

It wasn't until we climbed over the hills to the quiet gray town of Sedbergh, on which Cambridge relies for so many of her best Rugger players, that I began to realize that there was going to be some consolation for a lack of lakes.

Our way lay through the narrow defile of Gardsdale, with the great smooth mass of Baugh Fell rising steeply to 2,200 feet on the north, and Aye Gill Pike equally steeply to much the same height on the south. The sides of these grass fells were scarred by innumerable narrow gullies down which presumably, in normal times, cascades of water fall to feed the tiny Clough, a shallow stream with rocky bed, overhung with trees, which we crossed and recrossed about a dozen times. There were

plantations of trees on the hillsides, a few long walls and an occasional farm. At the "Moor Cock" Inn beyond Hawes Junction we came into the top of Wensley Dale, the broadest of all Yorkshire dales, through which flows the River Ure. It remains broad for the whole of its thirty-six miles.

A blizzard was whirling over Wild Boar Fell and powdering Abbotside Common with a thin coating of snow, but Wensley Dale itself was green under the heavy snow clouds as we drove through Hawes Town. I was startled at the rich fertility of the land that lay before me. The green dale looked as placid and smiling as the snow-covered fells above Hawes looked fierce and forbidding. The high hills, with edges of black rock and heather at the top, lie back from the valley at the sort of easy angle I like to adopt when I bask with hands behind my head in the sun. Becks and gills came tumbling down from all sides, and there were happy looking farms dotted about companionably all over the place. Every mile or two we saw a clean, dignified, gray village of one long street, either on the south or north bank of the river. Wensley Dale is not at all a lonely place.

We turned aside at Buttersett to climb over to Countersett[1] to see the lovely lake of Semerwater,[2] Yorkshire's only large natural sheet of water. It covers what was once a prosperous city of palaces and towers a mile long and half a mile broad. One day an angel in the guise of a beggar seeking hospitality was turned away from every door except one (I find that hard to believe of Yorkshire) and the next day water swallowed up the whole place except the cottage where he had

been taken in. This, of course, explains why Yorkshire has no other lakes. At the head of this lake three more lovely dales, Bardale, Raydale and Cragdale, fork away to the heart of the rounded hills. But we turned back to regain Wensley Dale at Bainbridge, where at ten o'clock every night from Holy Rood to Shrovetide the blower of the forest horn used to sound his warning note to call in belated travelers from the hills.[3]

A break in the lowering snow-clouds revealed the sun as we came to Aysgarth, where the water flows between high, wooded rocks over a very broad succession of limestone terraces forming a waterfall of great charm. You probably know Turner's picture of this. These waterfalls or "forces" are perhaps the crowning glory of the dales, but in this time of drought they were not in their most impressive mood. Usually their music is tumultuous, their energy magnificent. The name of "force" suits them well.

The dale became even greener, more wooded and more gentle as we came to Wensley, a village of cottages that cluster round a picturesque green and delightfully gray-towered church with horse-box pews, heraldic devices of the Lords of Bolton, a very early and ornate brass of a priest in full robes, and a wooden aumbrey for relics and offerings unlike any that I have ever seen elsewhere.

Wensley's village green is the scene of one of Frith's pictures; and it is jolly to recall an old Wensley custom by which from noon on Easter Day to noon on Easter Monday men took off all the girls' shoes they could capture, and then for twenty-four hours the girls made a retaliatory raid on the men's hats and caps.

A mile or two further on we crossed the River Ure and climbed up to Middleham, a small, gray town of many inns, two market-places (one of which is a swine-market), and a grim medieval, four-square, ruined castle of such splendor that it well deserves its title of the "Windsor of the North."

If ever a castle was haunted, this is.

As I wandered in and out of its roofless towers and halls, I found myself dogged by the memory of one piteous face, that ill-starred, strange Lady Anne Neville, who was fascinated as a rabbit is by a stoat into marrying the murderer of her husband, Edward Prince of Wales and her father-in-law, Henry VI, and who in this castle brought to birth (and eight years later saw die) her son by that murderer.

"Was ever woman in this manner wooed?
Was ever woman in this manner won?"

proudly cried Richard III, but he little thought that his crook-back shadow would be completely overwhelmed by that of his tragic Anne, in this her now desolated fastness. It is her sadness, not his strength, that now permeates these derelict walls.[4]

From Middleham we turned back along the north bank of the Ure through Leyburn, where there was a very half-hearted sort of market being held, to see Bolton Castle, also associated with the memory of an ill-starred queen, for here Mary Queen of Scots was held prisoner for seven months in 1568.

For sheer loveliness and strength I have never seen a castle to compare with this fourteenth-century quad-

rangular palace-fortress with a high, square tower at each of its four corners. It just flaunts its impregnable magnificence on the open hillside, fearlessly inviting assault from every quarter. It hasn't even got a moat. It doesn't stand on a rock. It depends entirely on its four grim towers and high walls. We had the good luck to find the caretaker unwilling to take us round, so we roamed at our pleasure through Queen Mary's chamber, a vaulted, stone room overlooking a rectangular, cobbled courtyard covered with grass; looked down into a dark, deep dungeon entered only by a trap in the roof; and then climbed to the battlements in the falling snow and looked out over Wensley Dale, now so white that every wall and beck on the fell-side stood out like markings on a brass-rubbing. The snow gave the tops of the fells a shape they lacked before. Penhill in particular looked like a white lion at rest.

We then went westward along the north side of the dale, past the fortified farm of Nappa, once the home of the still prolific Metcalfes [5] (I saw the name everywhere I went) and now a forest of snowdrops—the ghost of Mary Queen of Scots still walks here—and so to gray Askrigg where stands a very handsome modern school. Yorkshire is full of handsome schools.

Three or four miles further on we deserted Wensley Dale, which we had now explored both up and down, for the open moor of Abbotside Common. As soon as we climbed out of the dale the country instantly became extremely wild. The deep gully of Fossdale Gill lay precipitously below the hedgeless road on our left, and the beacon and cairn of Lovely Seat—a lovely name for a lovely mountain—stood 2,200 feet high immediately

above, an easy walk over the heather, as we ourselves were over 1,700 feet up.

But the road was a foot deep in snow, and another blizzard descended on us, so we drove on over the top to the Butter Tubs, a weird series of limestone pot-holes by the side of the road. As I wandered over some apparently harmless, uneven, snow-covered humps of bowlders and coarse grass, I found myself suddenly looking down a narrow, circular, limestone chasm or chimney, a crevasse that simply disappeared into the bowels of the earth vertically. There are about a dozen of these in a dozen yards, and like the "forces" in the dales you don't see them till you're right on them. Geologists amuse themselves by letting themselves down these holes on ropes in order to investigate the strata and the subterranean rivers that flow through the heart of the mountains. As a place to throw unwanted bodies, these pot-holes are ideal, but for the sake of children and animals it might be as well to fence them off. And on a dark, snowy night if you stray off the main road your chances of disappearance are considerable.

The road ran steeply down from the Butter Tubs with the gully of Cliff Beck on our right to Swaledale, a parallel dale to Wensley Dale, but as different from it as dragon from angel. In Wensley Dale, where they make cheese, all is fair, smooth and gentle. In Swaledale, where men used to mine for lead, all is fierce, rugged, steep, awe-inspiring and grand. The gills and becks tumble down the rough sides like cataracts. Even in this time of drought the fell-side was white with the foam of falling water. The river Swale itself is famous

for its noisy turbulence, but it alone in this stern valley was gentle. It was even sluggish owing to the long drought.

The villages, like the hills, are more rugged than the Wensley Dale villages. Thwaite, Muker, and Gunnerside are just collections of gray houses clinging precariously to the steep, scarred sides of the fells. You step off your roof on to your back-garden. Nothing here is flat except the actual bed of the river. Everything is on a slope (and a steep slope), and the tops of the overhanging fells which hem the valley in on both sides have a dark, grim, vertical edge of limestone under the smooth summit.

Then suddenly, at Reeth, the dale changes. There are woods out of which peep the ruins of a Priory and an Abbey. Trees grow out of limestone cliffs. It becomes like the Derbyshire dales at Lathkill and Matlock.[6] And so we came to Richmond, the garrison-town of the Green Howards, a magic place of tall towers, that of the Grey Friars being one of the most graceful in all England; of narrow alley-ways called "wynds," just as in Edinburgh; of ancient postern-gates, a cobbled market-place on a slope, and to crown all, a tremendous square Norman castle standing on an unscalable rock above the cascading, winding Swale. Old, tumble-down, red-roofed houses nestle close under the castle-walls on the town side for protection as chickens nestle under a hen's wing.[7]

From the top of the great keep, which stands just less than a hundred feet from the ground, we looked down over the winding, rocky, wooded valley of the Swale and the distant Mowbray plain to the long ridge

of the green hills of Hambleton, and, turning, saw the sun set behind the white Pennines.

We let ourselves down into the castle's dark dungeon by a ladder, to see the quarters occupied by two kings of Scotland, William the Lion, and David II. We scrambled about among the ruined walls of Robin Hood's Tower and the Gold Tower, wandered over the vast green court, and tried to find the vault which leads to the hall where Arthur and his knights still sleep. But again for the third time that day it was of an ill-starred Royal lady that I mainly thought, of Constance and her son, Prince Arthur, imprisoned here by King John:

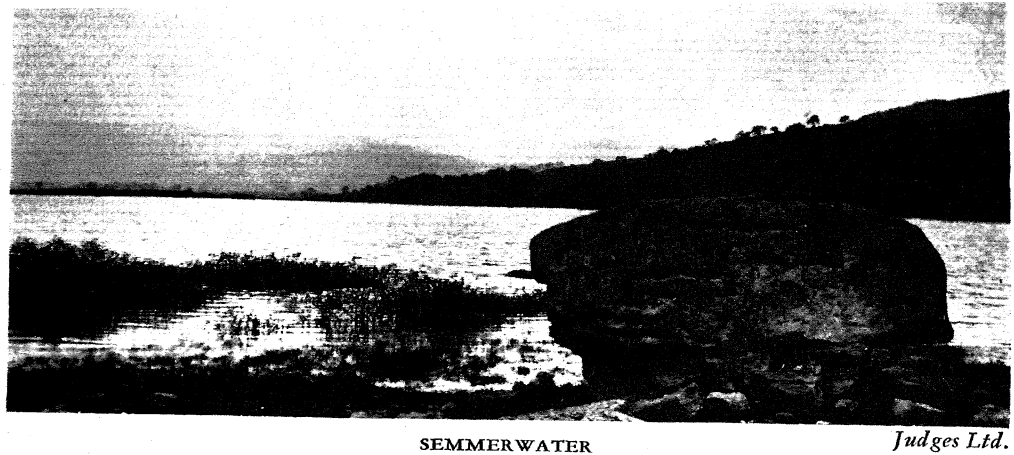
> *"Here I and sorrow sit,*
> *Here is my throne, bid kings come bow to it."*

In the evening before curfew, with the new moon and her attendant star reflected in the black, still water of the Swale, we walked along the river bank to Easby Abbey, a very lovely ruin on the water-side.

After an uncomfortable night spent partly in inhaling gas from a leak in my bedroom, partly in listening to revelers going home from one o'clock to three, and partly in watching the sun rise over the Cleveland hills at 5.30, I got up to wander round the Castle Walk, a narrow path under the walls and above the river. But I met no lass of Richmond Hill, and heard no muffled roll of the drummer-boy who never came back from Easby. But, in spite of the drought, I did realize something of the majesty of the Swale as she flowed through her wide, rocky bed, hundreds of feet below, and under



WENSLEYDALE FROM BUTTERTUBS PASS *Judges Ltd.*



SEMMERWATER *Judges Ltd.*

those two high arched bridges which, in time of her fullness, she causes to quake.

At nine o'clock we set off northward by way of Aske Hall and the wide, long street of Gilling to the Roman road leading to Greta Bridge. Here is Rokeby, painted by Turner and described by Scott, and as we wandered about on the flat, gray marble and limestone slabs that mark the junction between the broad Tees and narrow Greta, naturally snatches of Scott's verses recurred to the mind. He chose as romantic a setting for his drama of Rokeby as for his own home of Abbotsford, for the Tees just here is as fine as the Tweed at Dryburgh, flowing in a deep trench of solid limestone rock with rich woods on both banks. While as for Brignall Banks—

> "O, *Brignall Banks are wild and fair*
> *And Greta woods are green*"

as ever they were in the days of Wilfred and Matilda. It is like Glen Lyon on a small scale. The deep, brown water of the Greta falls down under a high, arched bridge between precipitous banks with beech, silver birch and pine growing apparently out of the solid rock, over smooth, wide slabs and bowlders to join a Tees, less tumultuous, less thunderous, but deeper, wider and older. The Tees has its fling further up.

The narrow, dark, romantic glen of the Greta separates Rokeby from the fortified tower of Mortham and is haunted by a lady of Mortham, known as the Dobie. Just beyond Rokeby, which is still the home of the Morritts as it was in Scott's day, we crossed the Tees into Durham, over a toll-bridge just opposite the ruins of Eggleston Abbey, where is a lovely beck called Thors-

gill. And here all the houses on the hillside became white —not, however, with snow. In Durham they whitewash, in Yorkshire they don't.[8]

Barnard Castle lay just ahead, a place of a most undignified museum, a most dignified school, and a castle (once the home of Baliol) which stands, as Richmond stands, on a rock above the river.[9] We here turned west once more, through Bowes, the setting of Dotheboys Hall, on to Stainmore, by far the wildest bit of country we had so far seen. We were no longer in a dale, but on an open, unprotected moor of heather, peat and bog, with uninterrupted views over scores of miles of snow-covered, high fells of the main Pennine chain. The moor itself is exactly like Dartmoor without its tors; undulating, high, wide, trackless and houseless, except for an occasional isolated farm by the roadside among trees. The hedgeless road was marked with high posts to guide the traveler through the snow.

We stopped at the old Spital or "Hand of Glory" farm for a cup of milk, and the woman of the house told us how the house got its name. In 1797, when it was a posting-house, an old, strange woman asked for shelter one stormy night, and the maid Bella, noticing that she wore horseman's gaiters under her skirts, decided to watch her. Late that night, thinking Bella to be asleep, the old woman produced a brown, withered human hand from her cloak, and placing in it a lighted candle, passed it before the girl's eyes muttering a charm:

> "*Let those who rest, more deeply sleep;*
> *Let those awake their vigils keep.*

Then the hag, turning away, added:

> *"O hand of Glory, shed thy light;*
> *Direct us to our spoil to-night."*

After this she pulled the window-curtain aside and said:

> *"Flash out thy blaze, O skeleton hand,*
> *And guide the feet of our trusty band."*

The light then shot up a bright, lurid gleam and the woman opened the door and blew a shrill whistle. The brave young maid seized the opportunity to push her down the steps, slam the door on her, and then rush off to try to wake the rest of the household, but without avail. They were under the spell. Then there came bangings on the door and cries below the window, so she extinguished the candle in the Hand of Glory by throwing a cup of milk over it. This released the household from its spell, and they dashed downstairs, and fired into the darkness, apparently wounding one of the unseen enemy, who then disappeared. For years the withered hand was kept in the house.[10]

In the large kitchen of this house a seven-year-old boy was sitting in front of a roaring fire crying piteously because he could not get warm. The children of the farm have to go twelve miles every day to school and walk three of them.

Just beyond the "Hand of Glory" is the Rey stone, a very ancient monument, supposed to mark a one-time boundary between England and Scotland. It was also

one of the trysting places of Allen-a-Dale, the outlaw.

Just beyond this we got a magnificent and sudden view through a gap in the hills of the green valley below and the snow mountains of Westmorland and Cumberland beyond, but just before descending to Brough we climbed east once more for our last zigzag. The country seemed wilder than ever as we climbed round the slopes of Iron Band and saw all the distant northern fells of Dufton, Murton and Chonkley completely covered in snow. There were no roads, no walls, no houses, no tracks, nothing but a white waste. The posts by the side of the hedgeless road were higher than ever to prove to how great a depth the snow drifted here, but after we came to Lune Head we were so much below the snow-line that we ran into a pack of beagles actually hunting, though the going must have been hard for hounds' feet.[11] Nothing was more strange than the way we kept on running into and out of the snow area.

The moors beyond Middleton-in-Teesdale were spattered with whitewashed cottages. We were back once more in Durham. But the land was quite green. We turned up Teesdale to High Force where we walked on a snow-covered track through a pine-wood to the finest waterfall in England. Even in this time of drought the Tees was thundering as it swept down this seventy-two feet cataract into the black pool below the high, narrow cliffs. There were icicles about ten feet long hanging from every crevice of this stone pillar. The Tees above High Force is just like the Wallabrook above Chagford —a moorland peat river leaping over great bowlders.

The road to the north wound its way up to 2,000 feet over the high hills for seventeen miles, during which

we passed one house, at Langdon Beck, and one car, and encountered a good deal of snow. Always on our left were three great peaks of the Pennines, at the very edge of the world, merging into the iron-gray snow-clouds. We kept on changing counties, so that I never knew whether we were in Yorkshire, Durham, Westmorland, Northumberland, or Cumberland. I thought of the wretched Henry VI after his defeat at Hexham, wandering vaguely over these stupendous wastes, so glorious and free for the walker, so terrifying to the fugitive. If you want loneliness, trace the Tees to its source. If you want the loneliest road in England take that which links Tees to Tyne.

And so at last we came over the hills to the valley of the South Tyne and Alston, our furthest north, a gray town of great antiquity and charm, set on the sides of a hill, an admirable center for the lover of wild country, known to and beloved by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald—but to very few other people. We turned southwest and climbed another 2,000 feet over the main ridge of the Pennines above Cross Fell, and so came for the last time to the extreme edge of the white mountains and looked down into another world.

It was a sight that I shall never forget. The long, green valley of the Eden from Carlisle to Penrith was dark but plainly visible under the gray clouds, but beyond the plain rose the exquisite shapes of the snow-capped mountains of the Lake District lit up mystically by thin, golden shafts of the afternoon sunlight that pierced the heavy blankets of cloud that hung just above them. A tiny, thin, shining copper bar of light at Helvellyn's foot revealed Ullswater. It was like look-

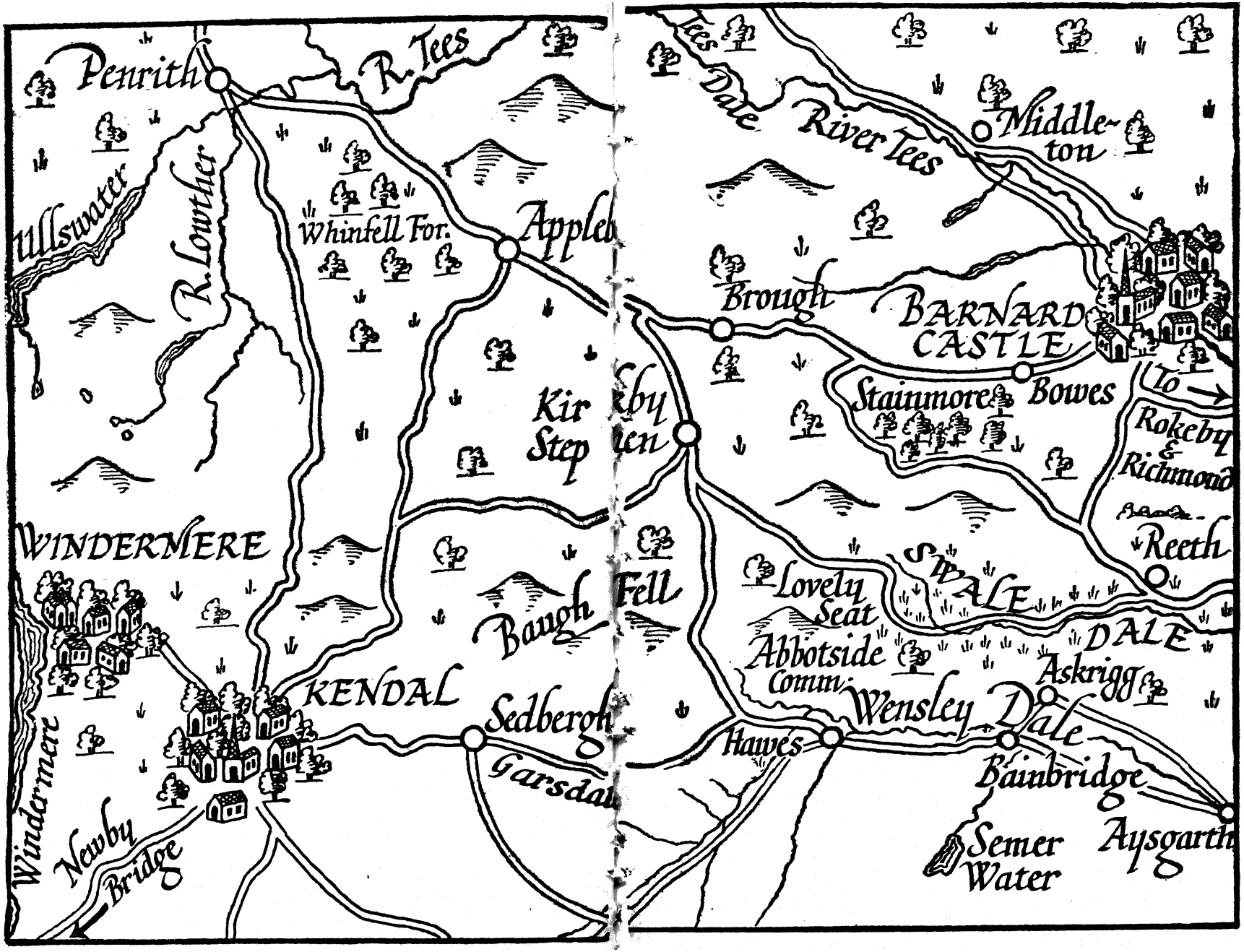
ing down from the gallery of a great theater on to a distant stage-set of the painted mountains of Lilliput. It was impossible to believe that they were real or that they were not really below, but on a level with us or even higher.

"I believe," said my host, "that the only view in the world to beat this is that of Everest seen from Darjeeling." [12]

"I bet it doesn't beat it in this light," I said. "Nothing could."

It was a fitting end for the wildest trek in England, a succession of double S zigzag turns across and across the Pennines, with Windermere as starting-point and Penrith to finish. In two days we had crossed the Pennines six times, always over the top. This range has no passes as the Scottish and Welsh and Lake District mountains have. If you want to cross the Pennines you have to go over the top. This may account for their wildness. It certainly accounts for their attraction.

For the lover of castles, the lover of dales, and the lover of hills that are open and wide and free, there can be no question that this land of the North Riding has no possible peer in England, and few outside it.


Penrith
R. Tees
Tees Dale
River Tees
Middle-
ton
Ullswater
R. Lowther
Whinfell For.
Brough
BARNARD
CASTLE
Stainmore
Bowes
To
Rokeby
&
Richmond
Reeth
WINDERMERE
Lovely
Seat
SWALE
DALE
Abbotsside
Comm.
Askrigg
KENDAL
Sedbergh
Wensley Dale
Hawes
Bainbridge
Semer
Water
Aysgarth
Newby
Bridge
Windermere

11. DORSET

THE south coast is, of course, not exactly unknown, but there is one bit of it that is less well known than it deserves to be.

I left Waterloo at six o'clock. It was only ten o'clock as I came to that combe or cleft in the cliffs in the cup of which stands Lyme Regis, but every one in this sleepy hollow seemed to have gone to bed. There were no lights in the houses, no people in the narrow, steep, winding street.

I chose the "Three Cups" Hotel, which stands nearly at the bottom of the cup, for no better reason than that I had once seen Mr. G. K. Chesterton sitting in the porch.

"After securing accommodation the next thing to be done was unquestionably to walk directly down to the sea." Those are Jane Austen's words, not mine, but like Lord Tennyson, I was more anxious to see the exact spot where Louisa Musgrove fell than I was to see the spot where the Duke of Monmouth landed, so off I went along the deserted parade, a place of steep, tree-crowned banks above which houses hang, as they do in Amalfi, like bird-cages from the rocks, round to that ancient crescent-shaped, stone breakwater, shaped like a shepherd's crook, known as the Cobb, from which the high-spirited Louisa jumped.

I have always been inclined to jeer at that incident in "Persuasion" as too highly colored, but in the moonlight I found walking on this unrailed, rough stone parapet, high above the sea, quite exciting enough to keep me warm in a cold wind. The Cobb is wide enough to drive a coach and four along, but it is canted up in places like Brooklands, so that the chance of slipping into the sea is high, while the drop on the quay-side is far too great to be jumped with safety. No wonder they picked Louisa up for dead. It was bad enough walking down those projecting stone steps of Granny's Teeth in the semi-darkness.

But the outstanding interest to me about Lyme is neither Louisa Musgrove's accident, nor the Duke of Monmouth's landing, but the magnificent defense put up by the 600 townsmen of this quite untenable unwalled town under the leadership of Robert Blake in the Civil War. The 5,000 Royalists under Prince Maurice, who had thought to take it before breakfast, besieged it in vain for eight weeks, during which time the women disguised themselves in men's hats, red cloaks and breeches to make the fighting force appear stronger than it was.[1] Hugh Peters and other preachers delivered daily lectures of exhortation. Supplies were brought in under fire from the sea, and, at last, after the Royalists had lost 2,000 men and the defenders 120, the siege was raised. Blake then went away to defend Taunton, an even less defensible town, for a whole year, before turning his genius to the sea and becoming one of England's greatest admirals.

That Charles II's handsome, unstable son should have won to his cause the grandchildren of those who so

stoutly withstood his grandfather is one of the most ironical situations in Lyme's strange, eventful history.

But this town has more to offer than a dramatic past. As Jane Austen said: "A very strange stranger he must be who does not see charms in Lyme and its surroundings to make him wish to know it better."

Indeed, Lyme today is so strange a combination of the irresponsible, the picturesque, the dignified and the absurd, that to me it has always seemed like Bath transplanted to the sea, and then seen through the eyes of Alice through the Looking Glass. Even the shipping is runcible. Only the Mad Hatter could have planned that Parade. I find it wholly enchanting.

On its Devon or westward side a succession of landslides has made the cliff scenery an almost impenetrable jungle of wild plants and trees set in a range of toy Alps. On its eastward side the land is so serried with odd shaped, multicolored cliffs and hills shaped like upturned boats, giants' noses and sugar-loaves that it looks as if it had been thrown into disorder by a thousand earthquakes; while to crown all there is the huge bay, rimmed by the golden Chesil Beach, stretching out as far as Portland Bill.

The next day I took the nine o'clock bus to Charmouth, another sleepy place of one steep street on the side of a green hill. It was from an inn here called the "Queen's Arms" that Charles II, disguised as a lady's servant, so nearly escaped to France on September 22nd, 1651. Unluckily the sailor Limbrey, who had been engaged to take him over to St. Malo was deprived of his trousers and locked in his room by his suspicious wife so that he could not sail, and a local blacksmith,

discovering that one of the strangers' horses had been shod in Worcestershire, gave the alarm and caused Charles to be hotly pursued. The chase went up the long, straight hill through Morcombelake, down past the thatched cottages of Chideock [2] to Bridport, where, after boldly mixing with the Roundhead soldiers in the "George" Inn (now Mr. Beach's the Chemist), Charles outwitted his enemies by turning north at a spot now known as "Miraculous Divergence," up a lane towards Beaminster and Broadwindsor.

I have followed this track of Charles II from his defeat at Worcester to his final escape from Shoreham Harbor and found it almost as full of romance and beauty as that of Bonnie Prince Charlie after Culloden, though one country is as soft as the other is wild. If you want an unusual holiday I can recommend both these journeys. Prince Charlie's route can be seen in the Inverness Museum and Charles II's in a book called "The Royal Miracle."

I got off the bus at Bridport, a leisurely, handsome town of dignified red-brick houses and wide avenues that used to be rope-walks, and so ancient that in Edward the Confessor's day it boasted a mint, a priory, and 120 houses. Its port lies a mile or so south at West Bay, a tiny harbor at the end of a wide green valley between two high cliffs. Here I saw the white Dutch barge "Albatross" discharging cattle-cake, with much washing hanging out to dry, and the "Odysseus" loading Bridport's famous sand. These and a tug called "Goldace" just about filled all the available space.

The harbor-master with some pride showed me the

ancient slip-way where for a hundred years wooden ships were built and launched.

To me the miracle is how any ships get in or out of this narrow harbor-mouth when the wind is off the sea. It is in the very eye of the great gales, and the only haven in the whole great sweep of the terrible Chesil Ridge is this inlet, which from above looks like a pair of black pincers jutting out between two cliffs.

I turned westward for one of the best walks in England, a switchback climb over the tops of golden, crumbling sea-cliffs. In the first gully I came to Eype, a tiny hamlet on the beach. There was no one about except a girl on a horse at the very edge of the lonely shore. Then I climbed 500 feet to Thorncombe, the sides of which were all charred, as the gorse had been burnt away.

From its summit I looked down on Sea Town, a sleeping cove with a mill, a river, a yellow-washed guest-house, an inn called the "Anchor," some black and white coastguard cottages with black fingers of chimneys and white eyes of windows, and a few wooden bathing-huts on the sand-dunes above the golden pebble-ridge, which falls very steeply into a sea of purple and blue and green and chalky white. There was no one alive here at all, but I passed a dead mole on the river bank and a dead rabbit with its eyes plucked out.

Beyond and above Sea Town rose the peaks and table-land of Golden Cap, a 620-foot sea cliff, the front of which has been eaten away by the sea to a depth of three or four hundred yards, so that all the different strata stand out very clearly. The foot of the cliff is of a light gray color like molten lava, which fades into an ex-

quisite shade of slate blue. The middle is orange sandstone, and at the top, under the golden gorse-covered turf, is a thin layer of white marble. For beauty of line and color it has no rival in England. It has to be seen to be believed.

Oddly enough, in spite of the drought, I found two patches of bog, not on the sides, but in the actual cliff-face which I tried to cross. Trees and shrubs grow fantastically and riotously out of the disturbed soil, and everywhere the gorse was in full bloom. The hedge-banks on the sides were covered with yellow celandines and primroses; jackdaws were chattering over the top; and when at last I scrambled up the last blackened slope, at an angle of about one in two, on to the gorse-covered plateau at the top I lay on the edge in the hot sun and watched two ravens, after dismissing a too impertinent kestrel which tried to mob them, play far below over the waves and among the lower cliffs.

The view from Golden Cap is superb. Westward I could see the shining windows of Lyme, the white cliffs of Beer, and the red cliffs of Seaton; eastward, the orange cliffs of Burton Bradstock, and the grand sweep of the long Chesil Beach fading into the gray nose of Portland Bill. If you want a really lonely walk try the eighteen miles along Chesil Beach from Burton Bradstock to Portland, where the pebbles grow gradually in size from tiny specks of sand to giant potatoes.[3]

Immediately below Golden Cap is a little ruined white stone church in a field. Its name is Stanton St. Gabriel. The aisle was full of elder-bushes, brambles and sloes, and the altar had a wild-rose tree growing out of it. Cows were grazing outside and a donkey stood pensively

in the porch as I passed by. Just below the church is a red-brick thatched farm among trees where I got a cup of milk before climbing on to Stonebarrow, a fine stretch of open moorland overlooking the sea on one side and the green wooded pasture land of Marshwood Vale on the other. This was one of the jolliest walks I have had, because the wind was at my back and the sun on my face, an ideal combination.

As I crossed Charmouth Bridge I saw a notice to the effect that any person injuring any part of the bridge was liable to be transported for life. At Tolpuddle some farm laborers were transported for life a hundred years ago for daring to suggest that their wages should be raised from 8*s.* to 9*s.* a week.

After tea I collected my baggage from the hotel at Lyme Regis and drove by way of many inns made gay by flamboyantly painted signposts, along the moorland road above the Chesil Beach, to Abbotsbury, where there is a famous Swannery, a magnificent tithe barn, and an ancient chapel on the summit of a knoll. Then I climbed by way of Portesham to the monument of Nelson's friend, Admiral Hardy, which stands high on Black Down among cromlechs and tumuli, and so came by way of the chalk down to Winterborne St. Martin, where the stream flows by the side of the road. Thence I went by way of the queer earthworks of Britain's finest prehistoric camp at Maiden Castle to the home of another Hardy, the author of "Tess of the d'Urbervilles," in Dorchester.

I know Dorchester well, but it was the first time that I had actually stayed at Max Gate, the quiet red-brick house among the trees, in which Thomas Hardy lived

for forty-three years. Mrs. Thomas Hardy not only showed me the manuscripts of her husband's novels and poems, and the very rare Roman pottery that he had dug up on the garden, but she also gave up the whole of the following day to taking me round to places associated with his name and work. We went first to Stinsford Churchyard where his heart lies buried under the ancient yew by the side of his father and mother. In the gray church I saw the pew in which he sat as a small boy under a monument with a skull carved under it and the Christian name of Angel on it (both factors of some importance in his development), and the stained-glass memorial-window to him with his favorite passage about the "still small voice."

Stinsford, the Mellstock of the novels, is a most attractive hamlet with a gray church and rectory wedged in between two great houses, one the home of the romantic Lady Susan, the other the country-seat of the Hanburys, and a footpath leading down to a wooded walk by the side of a crystal-clear, shallow chalk stream. Close by is the village stile on which Hardy sat to read the unfavorable review of his first novel, "Desperate Remedies," and also the house where the little girl lived whom he as a boy used to pass daily and greet with a blush, but never dared to speak to, so deep was his love for her.

About a mile away is Upper Bockhampton, a secluded collection of about a dozen houses dotted about in a wooded dell at the top of which, hidden among orchard trees, is the two-storied, white-washed, thatched cottage where Thomas Hardy was born. If ever a house was remote from a restless world this is. It exudes peace.

No traffic passes it, for the lane ends at its gate. It is so quiet that when he was a boy Hardy used to hear the tranters in the cottage far below treading out their measures in the country dances. Beyond it, behind a curtain of tall pines, lies an undulating, bracken-covered common protected from the outer world by a thick plantation of firs. Away over the top lies Rainbarrow, from which the sensitive boy looked out over that wide expanse of dark heath with the occasional stunted tree that played so large a part in molding his outlook on life. A visit to his birthplace explains exactly the source of Hardy's inspiration. More than any other writer this ancient Briton of English literature owes his genius to the place that bred him. He is the articulate expression of that place.

Those of us who are accustomed to the much wilder scenery of the North find it hard at first to understand how this heath could justify the epithet of haggard, colossal, or mysterious, but, as Hardy explicitly states, it is only at the point of its nightly roll into darkness that the great and particular glory of Egdon Heath begins.

Hardy's was a brooding, somber spirit that found itself most in sympathy with the heath when night and the lonely land merged into one, or when it was roused in winter by the storm its lover and the wind its friend. To understand the effect of the swarthy monotony of Egdon Heath on the sensitive imagination of this poetic temperament it is necessary to take into account the fact that the rest of Dorset is soft, colorful, and fertile, a place of water-meadows, comfortable, gray, gabled manor-houses, warm, stone cottages with thatched roofs

and stone-mullioned windows, big dairy farms, rolling chalk downs, and woods, a land of sleeping beauty.

To any one accustomed to the serene soft colors of Stinsford stream and Bockhampton woods the rugged, unkempt, irreclaimable, wild, brown heath on which only gorse, heather and bracken can grow, must seem elemental, and awe-inspiring. There stands on Cliff Clump a lonely outpost of tall, ragged pines. Barrows and tumuli like titanic molehills join with isolated thorns and lightning-blasted, dead tree-trunks to break the sea-like wave of the arid dark waste. At Culpepper's Dish there is a mysterious cone-shaped pit in which grows a tall tree whose top does not reach the surface of the ground. Its origin nobody knows.

Where all else is shifting Egdon Heath alone seems abiding and eternal, its origins, like its end, beyond human conjecture. Its gaunt eeriness struck me most forcibly as we crossed it to find the church of Bere Regis where the flitting family of Tess put up the four-post bedstead in the churchyard under the very window of their Turberville ancestors. The canopied, Purbeck marble tombs are just as they were in Tess's time, their carvings defaced and broken, "their brasses torn from the matrices, the rivet-holes remaining like marten-holes in a sand-cliff." And still the twelve carved figures of bishops and pilgrims in their gay panoply of red and blue and yellow look down from their horizontal projections in the roof overhead as they have since the days of Henry VII.

From Bere we drove on to Wareham, whose grass-covered walls serve as a reminder that no other town in England has suffered such a succession of sieges, sack-



WORBARROW

Times photo.



CORFE CASTLE

Times photo.

ings, slightings and burnings. It now lies genially half asleep among the water-meadows between Frome and Puddle, its peace ruffled only by the motorists to Corfe.

We then climbed past the peacock-crowded avenue of Creech Grange to the top of Creech Hill, and thence went westward along the main Purbeck ridge, with Worbarrow Bay and the sea on our left, and the bare, dark waste of Egdon below on our right, now turning purple in the changing light.

If you want a cliff walk full of strange colors, walk from Worbarrow to Lulworth. It is like walking through a rainbow, for here you may see cliffs of yellow, dazzling white, rusty red, bright green, and jet black in the space of a mile, and always the sea is changing from deepest blue to lightest emerald.

After a bread and cheese lunch at the "Weld Arms" outside the castle walls of Lulworth we went to Woolbridge to see the tall-chimneyed, seventeenth-century gabled home of the Turbervilles that stands on the banks of the glistening Frome close by an ancient, gray, five-arched bridge. It was here that Angel Clare brought Tess for their honeymoon, here that she made her confession, here that she was terrified by the two sinister portraits of the hooked-nosed, arrogant, treacherous Turberville women, her ancestors, painted on the panels built into the landing wall, portraits which still have the power to work ill on all who look on them.

We were taken over the lofty rooms by the daughter of the house, who said that, though she had lived there since birth, she had been troubled by no Turberville ghosts. She was more concerned about drafts. The portraits are still visible, but faint.

Close by, though hidden in a fold of the smooth, green downs, is the attractive rambling village of East Chaldon, the home of Mr. T. F. Powys, whose interpretation of the Dorset rustic character serves as so odd a commentary to Thomas Hardy. It has been said that no railway company is likely to issue, on the strength of Mr. Powys's Dorset novels, a poster, "Come to Powys land." I suggest that it would be wise if they did so, for the land is as lovely as the novels are brilliant, while as for the truth in them, human behavior is erratic and unaccountable everywhere, and searchers after the macabre will find instances of the gruesome as plentitful here as in less happy-seeming areas. Tragedy, alas, does not confine itself to ugly places.

As I waited for my train from Dorchester I sat on the grass slopes of the great amphitheater of Maumbury Rings, and watched twenty-two small boys kicking a football about in an arena where once Roman gladiators had fought, and just over two hundred years ago ten thousand spectators assembled to watch the nineteen-year-old girl, Mary Channin, publicly strangled and burned eighteen weeks after the birth of her child for having poisoned the husband whom she had been forced by her parents to marry.

It was here that the Mayor of Casterbridge renewed his acquaintance with Susan and, according to Thomas Hardy, that appointments of a furtive kind, but not those of happy lovers, used always to take place.

How strange the power of the great novelist is that in the smiling streets of Dorchester, where the passers-by all seem care-free and jolly, one should think all the time of Casterbridge and the tragic characters who

peopled this city of Hardy's imagination; how strange that a visit to a part of England that seems to ooze a sense of leisurely prosperity and charms us with its soft, restful beauty should really arouse in us a strong sense of the necessity of cultivating stoicism to face the terrors that lurk about our ways. Probably in the hurly-burly of life you and I think too little. Perhaps in the absolute silence of Dorset where quietness itself becomes a living presence it becomes possible to think too precisely on the invisible event. I think it's a risk worth taking.[4]

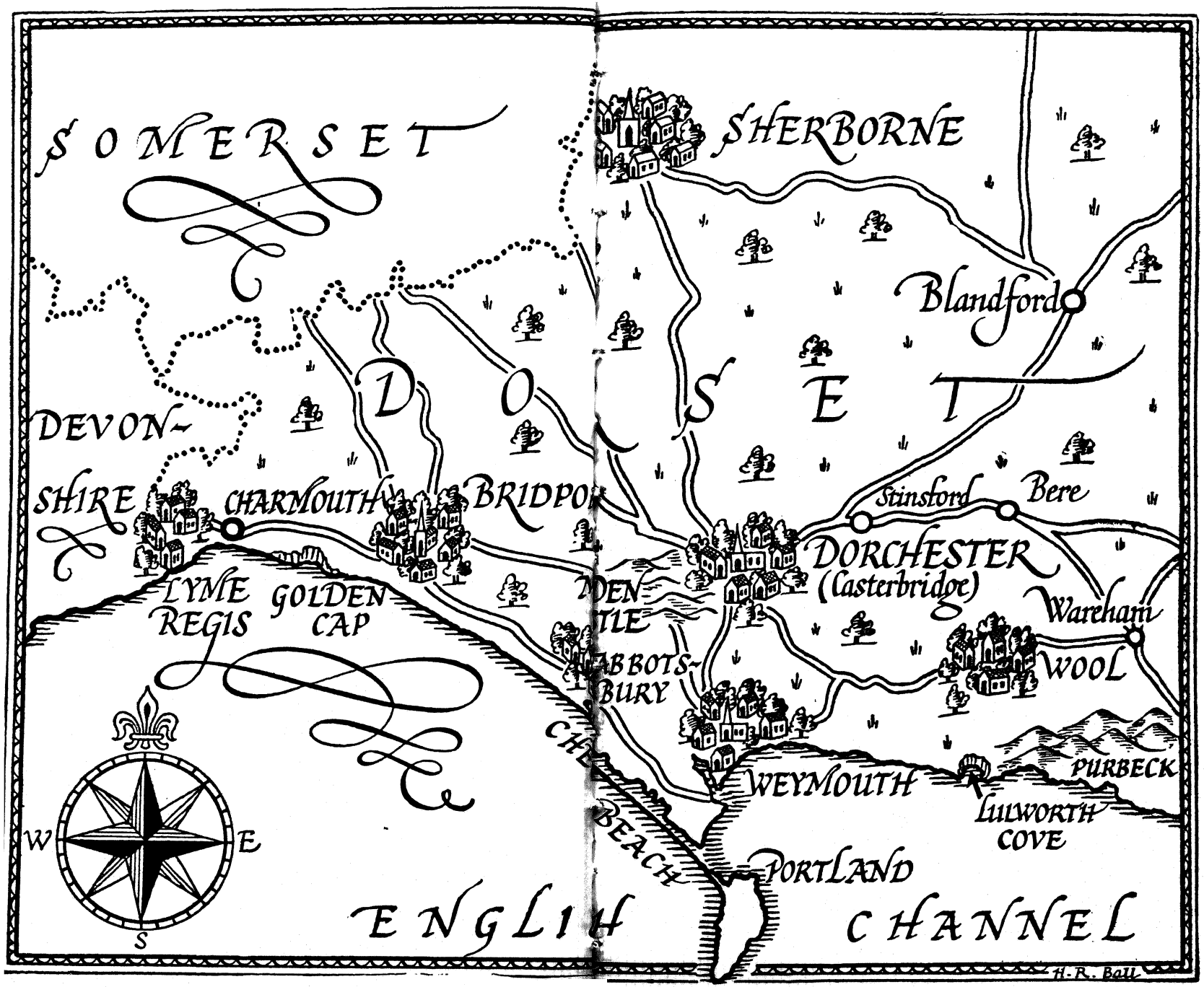
MY ORCHA'D IN LINDEN LEA

'Ithin the woodlands, flow'ry gleäded,
By the woak tree's mossy moot,
The sheenèn grass-bleädes, timber-sheäded,
Now do quiver under voot;
An' birds do whissle over head,
An' water's bubblèn in its bed,
An' there vor me the apple tree
Do leän down low in Linden Lea.

When leaves that leätely wer a-springèn
Now do feäde 'ithin the copse,
An' païnted birds do hush their zingèn
Up upon the timber's tops:
An' brown-leav'd fruits a-turnèn red,
In cloudless zunsheen, over head,
Wi' fruit vor me, the apple tree
Do leän down low in Linden Lea.

Let other vo'k meäke money vaster
In the aïr o' dark-room'd towns.
I don't dread a peevish meäster;
Though noo man do heed my frowns,
I be free to goo abrode,
Or teäke ageän my hwomeward road
To where, vor me, the apple tree
Do leän down low in Linden Lea.

William Barnes.


SOMERSET
SHERBORNE
Blandford
DORSET
DEVON-
SHIRE
CHARMOUTH
BRIDPORT
Stinsford
Bere
DORCHESTER
(Casterbridge)
LYME
REGIS
GOLDEN
CAP
Wareham
WOOL
ABBOTS-
BURY
CHESIL
BEACH
WEYMOUTH
PURBECK
LULWORTH
COVE
PORTLAND
W
E
S
ENGLISH
CHANNEL
H. R. Ball

12. GALLOWAY AND CARRICK

I *WENT* to Ayr because of my love for Robert Burns. I stayed in Ayr because of my instant and abiding affection for that old gray, historic town. It is an easy place to get to. I left Euston half an hour after midnight, and I was having breakfast in Ayr at half-past nine the following morning.

Ayr is by far the best center from which to explore, not only the Burns country, but also the mountains of Galloway and the land of Carrick, which are not, as so many English people imagine, in Ireland, though they are in sight of it.

It has the most comprehensive and best-run series of motor-buses I have yet come across. There are plenty of hotels—the one I stayed in, the Station Hotel, was both quiet and very comfortable.

Naturally my first objective was Kirk Alloway, to see the "but and ben" in which Burns was born, and the kirkyard in which Tam O'Shanter watched the witches dance. This village lies about a couple of miles to the south of Ayr, practically on the coast. I went there by bus, and was surprised first by the beauty of the girl who punched my ticket. I had forgotten Ayr's fame for bonnie lasses. Far less susceptible hearts than that of Burns must find themselves beating faster in

the presence of these red-haired, pink-cheeked, slim, smiling girl bus-conductresses of Ayr, who seem to go out of their way to be companionable to all their clients.

Kirk Alloway is a strange medley. By far the best thing about it is the peat-black water of the wide, deep, winding River Doon which flows under a high-arched, narrow, ancient, stone bridge with slender, tapering parapet, the Auld Brig o' Doon. This is still stone-cobbled as it was when Tam O'Shanter [1] first crossed before the warlocks caught him. I stood in the middle of this bridge and looked up the river to an old, dignified mill nearly hidden away under a very active rookery. I looked down the river on two oddly contrasting banks, the pleasanter on the southern side, a meadow full of lambs frisking among wild daffodils, here called yellow lilies. A blackbird was singing in an almond tree in full blossom.

The northern bank was a place of artificial red gravel walks, with seats like those on our own Thames Embankment, and a bandstand; a place entered through a turnstile from a lane garishly ornate with slot-machines. Above a thick yew hedge stands the Burns monument, which looks like a dragon sitting erect with a monocle in one eye, supported by three inverted dolphins, the whole raised on a lid held up by nine Corinthian columns.

On all sides men were mowing grass in the rain, and birds were singing. Close by stands the new kirk, which I found locked. On the opposite side of the road are the ivy-covered ruins of the Auld Kirk, the roof of which has been torn off by relic-hunters, while the old bell has mysteriously been spared. There are

lichen-covered tombs in the very body of the church, which was in ruins in the poet's time; here is buried his father.

There were no warlocks and witches dancing in the Auld Kirkyard last Thursday morning, but I caught something of the spirit of the old woman who fed the child's mind with spunkies and kelpies in the white, one-storied, low-ceilinged, thatched cottage where Burns was born, a little way up the road. You remember Keats's tirade against the cant and hypocrisy of birthplaces,[2] and how angry he was at this one, but I don't quite see what else could have been done here.

One gets, I think, the essential atmosphere, the fact that of four rooms the cattle had the two larger ones, that the bed on which Burns was born (let into the wall) had advantages other than that of saving room. It was warm, shut off, quiet, and out of any draft.

There are a good many relics, chairs and spinning-wheels, all of which evoked the odd epithet of "cute" from two ancient but indefatigable American women who were going round.

Near the cottage is the Burns Museum, in which are displayed holographs of most of the poems, a great number of his letters, and his commonplace book, in which he quotes Gray's profound saying: "Half a word fixed upon or near the spot is worth a cartload of recollection." I could have wished for more of his letters to Jean or Highland Mary. Those to Clarinda, of which there are many, scarcely show him at his most natural. I found far more of the essential spirit of Burns in the unpretentious, thatched "Tam O'Shanter" Inn in Ayr, where a girl showed me the upper room in which the

poet was put up for the night when he was, as she put it, "fou." This inn obviously hasn't altered much since Souter Johnnie, Burns, and their fellow cronies drank and sang uproariously together in these small but cozy parlors and climbed these narrow stairs.

In the afternoon I explored the Doon Valley, which is far more exciting than the Doone Valley on Exmoor, and even lovelier, though much less known by the English. First I followed it by bus parallel to its treeless banks through a wide, brown, moorland valley with white-washed farms on the hills and occasional ironstone pits and mining villages, gray and grim and full of character.

At Dalmellington,[3] a gray town standing sentinel at the very foot of the Galloway mountains, I left the bus and boarded a lorry going to Loch Doon.

As soon as we turned off the main road the scenery changed. We climbed by a winding, hedgeless way over a craggy, open moorland of heather and bracken, of bog myrtle and gnarled thorn, and suddenly from a rise I looked down on as wild a sheet of water as ever I saw —Loch Doon[4]—stretching for ten miles into the very heart of the high, gray, misty hills. Rain was falling on the distant sugar-loaf of Gullendoch.

The lorry went on and I ran down to the black waters which were ruffled into waves by the southeast wind. Then came the golden call of the whaup or curlew,[5] not just one or two as we get on Dartmoor, but from all sides came the cries. The long-beaked, gray birds flew to and fro over the desolate waters. There was a shepherd on the other side of the loch wandering about vaguely with two dogs. There were occasional long-

fleeced, black-faced sheep. I nearly trod on a dead grouse whose heart had been pierced by the claws of a hawk.

I walked along as far as the white farm of Beoch and looked upon the great gray hills where Bruce rallied his men and eluded his enemies. The road, made by German prisoners, goes on to the schoolhouse of Craigmulloch at the south end of the loch and from there a mountain track goes by way of Loch Macaterick and Craigmasheenie to Stinchar Bridge. This must be as lonely a walk as man can desire. The mountains beckoned me, but it was too late in the day for me to accept their challenge.

I turned back into Ness Glen, where the Doon begins its glorious life by dashing over bowlders through a tree-covered, rocky ravine, thirty feet wide and three hundred feet high. There is a private path on its western bank and a grand, scrambly, precipitous track high above its eastern side.

Seen from the train on the way home from Dalmellington in the evening light, all the mountains of Galloway turned to deepest blue. Why does Burns, with his love for the Doon, say nothing about the wild country in which the river rises or the sea into which it flows? We have to go to Crockett for the romance of the Galloway mountains. Read "The Raiders" if you want to get a sense of the grandeur and mystery of these hills.

The following day I went by bus along the coast, the land of the ruined castles. Here are castle after castle built right on the cliff-edge above the sea, all now in ruins, the first being that of Dunure, in the black vault of which Allen Stewart, Commendator of Crossraguel

Abbey, was roasted by the all powerful Kennedy, Earl of Cassilis. The most famous castle is that of Turnberry, which is the birthplace of Robert the Bruce.[6] The manner of his parents' marriage is interesting.

Marjory, Countess of Carrick, a young widow, one day in 1271, taking a sudden fancy to a young knight who crossed her path while hunting, invited him to her castle of Turnberry, but he, knowing her to be a ward of the King, did not wish needlessly to incur the royal anger, and so refused. She thereupon had him arrested, and compelled him to accept her hospitality. He obviously appreciated this treatment for they were married within fifteen days, and the eldest of their twelve children was Robert the Bruce.

This coast drive is very varied, for after the tiny, gray harbor of Dunure, which is like a Cornish fishing village, and the wider breakwater of Maidens, the rocks vanish, so that at red-roofed Turnberry we are on a flat coast with plowland and green golf-course running right on to the foreshore. Turnberry seems to be all hotel. At Girvan we arrived just as the brown herring boats were unloading, and the fishermen's yellow overalls and boots were covered with iridescent scales of fish.

After Girvan we turned inland by way of Pinmore and the wooded Valley of the Stinchar, in which there are five ruined castles in eight miles, and so by way of Pinwherry, and the wide, winding valley of the Doonside to Barr Hill, which, like Dalmellington, is another sentinel to the gates of the Galloway Mountains; but before we come to it we are in a land of pasture, beech hedges, large country houses among pine trees and larch woods on the river bank, and white farms on the hill-

side; while after it we climb on to the open moors, with nothing but peat butts to break the nearer line, and range after range of the gray mountains far away. There was one (and one only) stone circle at Cairnsbery Cairn.

This is the country of Mr. John Buchan's novel, "The Thirty-Nine Steps." The hedgeless road seemed to go on forever. There was no sort of cover, not a house, nor a shed. We passed nobody except a postboy on a bicycle. Sheep occasionally wandered across the road, and a few grouse flew over. But the land appeared to be given up to plover and curlew. The greatest excitement was passing over the River Cree out of Ayrshire into the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, for the surface of the roads instantly became less smooth. It is only right that Ayr, which produced Mr. MacAdam, should have the best roads in the country.

At Bargrennan, a tiny hamlet with post office, school, county library, farm and inn, we got off the bus, and after a bread and cheese lunch at the "House of the Hill" Hotel, we set off for Loch Trool. I here made a fatal mistake. The last bus back from Bargrennan left at four o'clock. We had only three hours and twelve miles to cover, easy enough by road, but my dislike of roads made me forget that this was a deserted one, and I struck up over the boggy hillside to the white house of High Minniwick, a short cut that took much longer than the road would have taken, because I had to keep going round patches of bog. However, there were compensations. I was among the curlew—I have never in my life seen or heard so many—and I found my first snake of the year right in my path.

I joined the road again at a fine waterfall of the river, where the Water of Minnoch dashes down between high gray rocks into deep black pools, under a red bridge.

Thereafter walking became easy, but it was too late. Glen Trool opened out widely and the high, lowering mountains drew nearer, but all I had time for was a peep at the south end of the loch, and anybody who knows Loch Trool will tell you that its real splendors lie round the corner where the mountains descend almost vertically into the water below the site of that historic spot where Robert the Bruce began in 1306 the series of victories over the English which culminated eight years afterwards at Bannockburn.

By keeping to the road on my way back to Bargrennan, I had the good fortune to meet a stag—the only one I saw in four days—and to put up a brace of black-cock. I also met one walker, a young man with a pack on his back, who told me that he was taking a chance of finding room at Buchan Farm far up the glen.

There is really only one way to conquer these Galloway Mountains; you must sleep under their shadow, and start walking at daybreak. When I looked back up the glen about half-past three, all the hills were completely enshrouded in mist. They are chary of revealing their beauty for long at a time. You have to snatch your moment when you can.

We turned inland at Maidens, which gave me a chance to see Kirkoswald, the home of Tam O'Shanter, whose cottage is very like that of Burns. It was here that Burns came to learn mensuration and had his trig-

onometry upset by the "charming filette," Peggy Thomson, his first serious love.

Between here and Maybole we passed the ruins of Crossraguel Abbey, one Abbot of which, Quinton Kennedy, had the temerity to argue with John Knox for three days.

Maybole, where the father and mother of Burns were married, is a gray town with shoe factories. We passed under its castle walls where poor Jean Hamilton was confined by her stern Covenanter husband, the Earl of Cassilis (pronounced Cassills) for trying to elope with the gypsy laddie, Johnnie Faa, who cast the *glamourye* over her but was caught and hanged for doing so.

The next day I made my third attempt to penetrate the Galloway Mountains.

This time I went through Dalmellington. After passing the village, the road climbs up a narrow defile very like Llanberis on a small scale, and so on to the top of a wild moor whence I looked down on Loch Doon, a vast waste of waters, backed by ridge after ridge of hills, and then descended by a long and lonely winding road over the moors to Carsphairn.

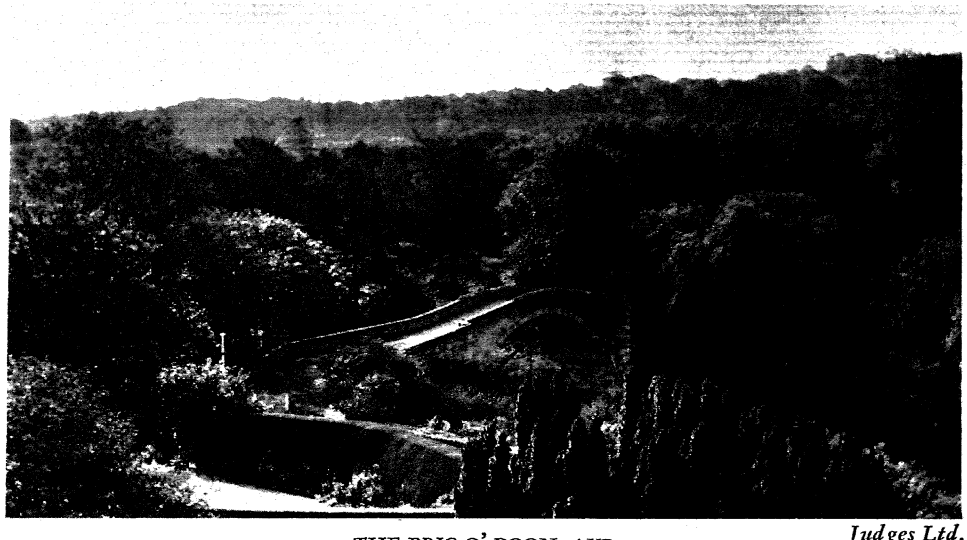
This was the first time I had seen these mountains with the snow on them. It had melted on the northern and western slopes. Only in the high peaks facing the southeast had it remained like long, thin, straggling eyebrows.

None of these peaks rises to more than 2,600 feet, but with their fringe of snow below the summit and vast dark mass below the snow-line they looked very enticing and majestic.

At Carsphairn most of the fishermen and walkers got off the bus, and, as the road descended still further into the valley and seemed to edge away from the hills I at first thought that I had made another mistake, but there was plenty of compensation in getting down to the tree-line again, as the wide, shallow water of Ken, by the side of which we drove into Dalry, is one of the loveliest stretches of tree-fringed river that I passed. And Dalry itself, perched on the hillside, is delightful.

At the "Lochinvar" Hotel I hired a car to drive me up the rough path some seven miles above Polbarrow Burn to Bush Farm where the car-track ends and the foot-track to the mountains begins. This route is clearly enough marked on the map, but it is difficult to find at the start. I was misled into taking a track marked with occasional T-shaped iron posts stuck into the peat at infrequent intervals, and so went round Bennan Hill instead of over it. The path faded out completely at Loch Harrow. There were four girls on the other side of the burn obviously bound for Corserine.

That was not my aim, so after plunging through the thick heather and a good deal of bog I veered left towards Loch Minnoch on the other side of Brennan, where I luckily regained the right track. I followed it up a steep ridge and found myself looking over a wide, wet, desolate, craggy moor, down upon Loch Dungeon, an inky black water with eight swans on it, above which rose the snow-fringed and menacing black mountains of Millfire and Milldown. There seemed no possible way up their rocky faces without a rope. Here I lost all trace of my path for the second time, and



THE BRIG O' DOON, AYR

Judges Ltd.



Times photo.

THE PEAKS OF ARRAN—FROM THE MAINLAND TWENTY MILES AWAY

only knew that I mustn't drop down to Loch Dungeon.

After floundering about in the bog for some time I once more regained the path, though it was very faint, and I was immensely heartened by meeting a bare-headed man and woman with packs on their backs. The man pointed out the almost indiscernible track by which I could cross the high ridge of the Kells Range in front, and on I went more blithely but now apprehensive of mist, as the gray clouds seemed to be concentrating on the peaks above me. I was anxious to make my conquest before they descended.

I crossed the House Burn with the enormous wide shoulder of Corserine on my right, and made for the track high above me. When I clambered up to it I found a well-defined path of loose stones which took me diagonally up the mountainside until it grew too steep, and then began the usual zigzag that tears at one's heart near the summits of all high hills. When it was over and I stood at the top I looked out over an unbelievable world. The gentle slope below me led to Back Hill of the Bush, which must surely be the loneliest house in all Scotland. At the foot of the slope beyond the bog of the Silver Flow lay three little lochs, Dry Loch, the Round Loch, and the Dragon; then came the Long Loch of the Dungeon, and further south a much larger loch, Loch Dee.

This land is called the Cauldron of the Dungeon, and a very suitable name it is. Rising almost sheer behind it are the black, misty Dungeon Hills, Mullwharchar,[7] Craignaw, Craiglee and Carlywee. These five great hills of Merrick are uneven, but stand side by side, and the shadows cast by them at morning and

evening have been aptly called the Fingers of the Awful Hand, while behind these dread fingers rise ridge after ridge of further black peaks, over which the rain was even then being split in great waves that blotted them out. That is the home of the cateran-people, the rievers who carried off their wives by right of dirk, on their saddle-bows.

I was just in time to see the Five Awful Fingers clearly before their gray shapes merged into the gray rain. On the sides of one there were gray, trailing lines of smoke like hair, and this too mingled with the gray of the rain.

I couldn't go on into the Cauldron of the Dungeon, much as I wished to. But some day I shall conquer that. It is the wildest scene I know. On my way down the sides of Corserine I watched two eagles[8] at play high above the summit of Milldown until they too disappeared in the rain. It was here that Mr. Dick[9] watched an eagle fighting an otter. It was here that I picked up the enormous gray feathers of a bird unknown to me. It also had died fighting, but there was nothing of it left but feathers scattered over a wide area.

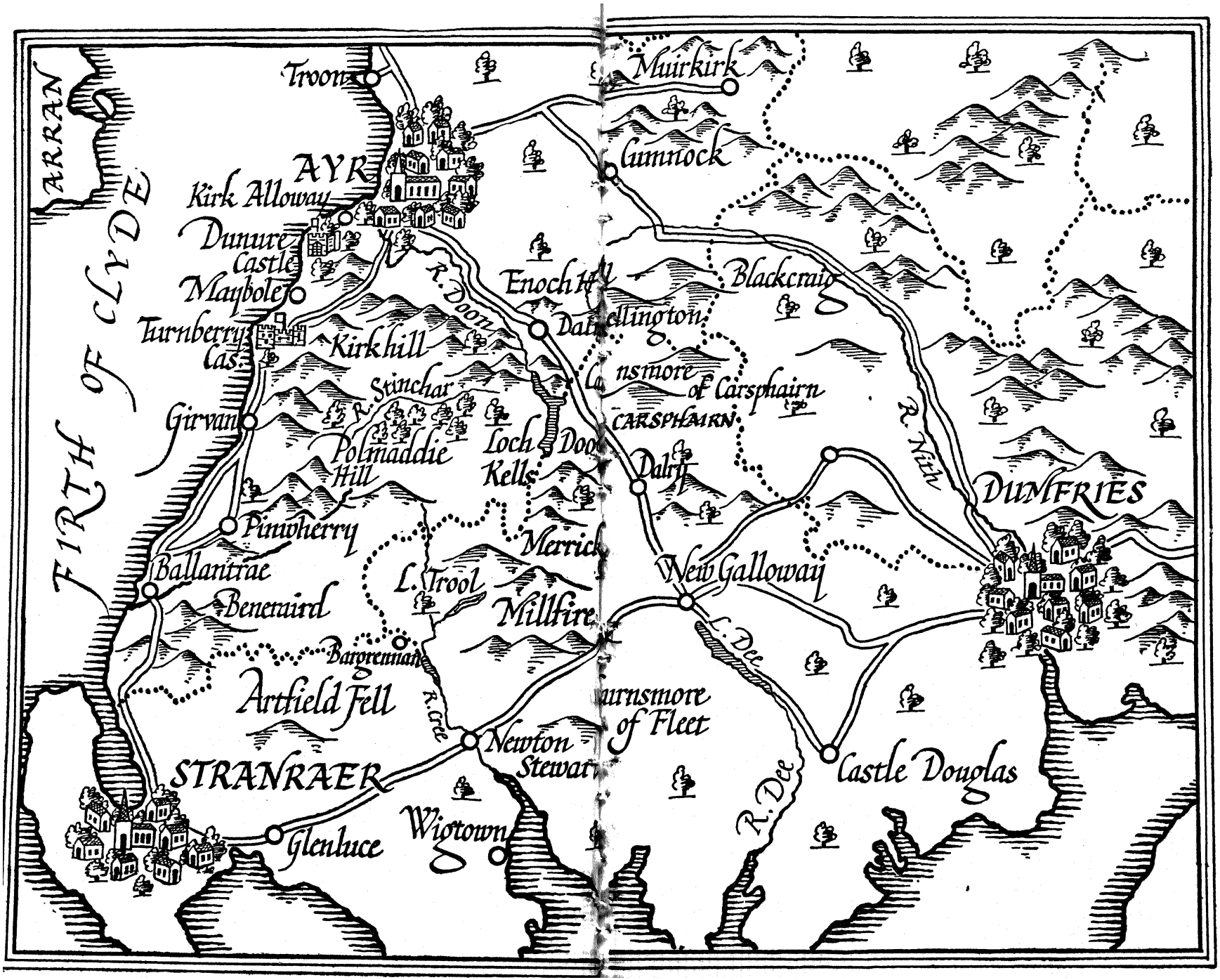
As I looked up from the bottom I saw the tiny silhouettes of the four girls on the ridge of the Kells, and almost immediately afterwards the rain swept over both them and me. It took me nearly two hours to get down again to the farm, and there over a tea of cheese, home-made marmalade, treacle scones and bannocks I learnt that the man I had met on my way up was the shepherd of Back Hill of the Bush coming in for his fortnightly supply of provisions.

The following morning I went to the fourth gateway into the mountains, by way of Kirkmichael with its reminders of Old Mortality and the Covenanters, and lovely Girvan water. This gateway is Straiton.

Now Straiton is the loveliest of all the four northern sentinels to the hills. It is a wee gray village, with one street of one-storied, slate-roofed cottages all joined together, the "Black Bull" Inn in the middle, a cottage with an earl's coronet and the date 1766 inscribed on it, and a pre-Reformation church.

But the rain prevented my penetrating the mountains this time. They were entirely hidden, so I went back to finish as I began at Kirk Alloway, but this time I went down to the mouth of the Doon; surely no other river merges more imperceptibly with the sea. And so over the sand-dunes, where men were gambling, boys putting up tents, lovers lying, and oyster-catchers piping, to the ruined castle of Creenan whence I looked over the dark sea to Arran almost hidden in the mists, and wondered how this magic land had escaped me for so long. It seems to me to have everything; great castles full of present beauty and ancient legend, looking out over Ailsa Craig, Arran, and Ireland; an infinite number of banks and braes of bonnie rivers; a most amazingly hospitable and friendly people as good to talk to as they are to look at; and best of all, a range of mountains and lochs as hard to conquer as any in the kingdom, all of wild and weird beauty.

And it isn't far. I worshiped in the evening in the Auld Kirk of Ayr where the boy Burns worshiped, and I had breakfast next morning in London.[10]


ARRAN
FIRTH OF CLYDE
Troon
AYR
Kirk Alloway
Dunure
Castle
Maybole
Turnberry
Cas.
Kirkhill
Girvan
Skinchar
Polmaddie
Hill
Pinwherry
Ballantrae
Benerard
Bargrennan
Artfield Fell
R. Cree
STRANRAER
Glenluce
Wigtown
Newton
Stewart
L. Trool
Merrick
Millfire
R. Doon
Enoch Hill
Dalrellington
Loch Doon
Kells
Muirkirk
Cumnock
Blackcraig
Carnsmore of Carsphairn
CARSPHAIRN
Dalry
R. Nith
DUMFRIES
New Galloway
L. Dee
Carnsmore of Fleet
Castle Douglas
R. Dee

13. SOUTH WALES

DO you know New Quay? No; I don't mean Newquay, Cornwall. I mean New Quay, Cardiganshire.

I was driven there from Carmarthen by a Welsh driver whose hair was as white as his heart was young. He represented the opposite pole from the staff of the Carmarthen hotel whose lack of interest and general dilatoriness connoted an extreme old age which their bodies belied. My driver's enthusiasm was that of a very young child. He was within an ace of removing his hands from the wheel and clapping vigorously more than once. He was by far the most entertaining, informative and good-natured guide I have yet encountered during these travels.

Our way lay northward up the winding, wooded combes first of the Gwili and then of the Duad rivers, and I was immediately struck by the resemblance of the countryside to that of Devon. The valley of the Gwili is exactly like Fingle Gorge, with gray, misty trees springing out of a steep hillside of brown bracken from which I expected to see stags steal down to the water. The roads had the same high-banked hedges, green with moss and ferns, yellow with primroses and celandines, with high elms and beeches growing on the

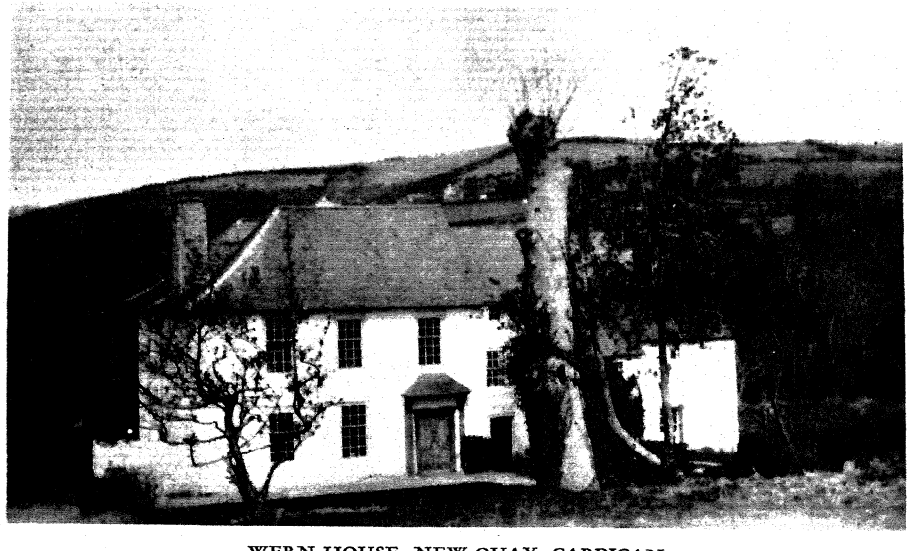
top, and hedges so high that I felt as if I were going through a never-ending bright tunnel of green and pale gold. There were the same white cob cottages with squat chimneys curtailed like the funnels of the bigger express engines, the same cottage-garden walls a riot of stone-crop and daffodils; and, most unexpectedly, the same red-faced laborers looked up from the road-side, and the same smiling women in men's black soft hats stood gossiping at the cottage doors. The differences from Devon were few and trivial. There were more goats and less thatch. The ricks were round and small and had spiky tops. There were fewer sign-posts on the by-roads, and more gypsies.

This is not in any way a lonely country. Even when we climbed to the top of the watershed, less than 1,000 feet, on to the moor, there were just as many white farms; the only difference being that the banks were now crowned with the gold of broom and gorse, and that the fields were less well cultivated. There was so much color that the land looked like a child's paint-box.

As we descended into and crossed the valley of the Teifi, the driver became electrically charged, and pointed with growing excitement first to the home of the "King of Music," the conductor of the Teifi choir ("They sing at Kingsway Hall," he said), and then, on the further side of Llandyssul, to the home of Iwan Davies, the boy who sang before the King. Llandyssul has other points of interest. You may not fish from the churchyard wall, but up till recently the church porch was used as a goal for a Good Friday football match in which all the village took part. The other goal-post was also a church porch, at Llanwenog, six miles away.



CAREW CASTLE



WERN HOUSE, NEW QUAY, CARDIGAN

It must have been an interesting game, for Llandyssul is set picturesquely but steeply on the side of a hill and the Teifi is broad and deep. I wonder if they sang as they played. We climbed out of Llandyssul on to another moor from which I could see westward to the fine sugar-loaf of Foelcwm-Cerwyn on the Precelly ridge, and northward over Cardigan bay as far as Bardsey Island.

There was not much traffic on the roads. There were one or two lonely pigs out for a morning's rooting. Lambs strayed from under gates; cows loitered past on their way to and from milking, accompanied by Welsh "coggies" (terriers) and sheepdogs, most of whom rushed at the car bent on suicide; sheep, with two legs tied together, stumbled awkwardly and hysterically by; and an immense number of gypsy caravans, carts covered with semicircular arches of green tarpaulin, were moored in the ditches with swarthy old men on the steps weaving withies into baskets while red-kerchiefed children played round the fire.

And so we came to Aberayron, a gray harbor with a beach apparently composed of lumps of coal and coal-dust, and then turned south to New Quay, which lies at the foot of a long gully. Halfway down this valley the driver stopped and led me to a four-square, white-washed house of great age in a sunny dell on the banks of a stream. He beat on the ancient wooden door in vain. I peered through a window and caught a glimpse of a room entirely paneled; of very old furniture; and of a portrait surely by a great master. Two women, one of them carrying a nine-months' old baby in her arms, appeared mysteriously at the top of the drive.

"You'll forgive me if I speak to them in Welsh," said the driver. He addressed every one we spoke to for two days in that tongue. There followed a long but hauntingly beautiful dialogue.

We entered the house. In the stone-flagged hall, which had that elusive smell that one only gets in the very oldest houses, there was a polished oak staircase wide enough to hold a coach and four. The elder of the two women spoke to me in English. "It was here that the King passed me by. He saluted me as he passed. It was a gray day and very early in the morning. It was probably my imagination."

"What king?" I foolishly asked.

She looked at me in surprise. "Henry the Seventh," she said, "I'll show you his room and bed. He slept here on his way to Bosworth."

In a tiny, green, paneled room upstairs I looked on the framework of the royal bed and to a notice in Welsh on the wall which they translated for me. In 1485 the then owner, Eimon ap Dafydd Lloyd, entertained Harry Richmond on his way from Milford Haven to encounter Richard III. Major Evans, the present owner, is no less hospitable, for I was allowed to roam more or less at will through powder-closets and long disused attics with floors that sloped like hammocks, and floors with great black holes in them, rooms with finely decorated ceilings and newly-scraped, ancient panels. On the walls hung portraits by Lely and prints by Hogarth. Marrows hung from the rafters in the huge kitchen, and there were bottle-fed pet white lambs in the byre. The garden was a mass of hyacinths

and the wood a blaze of daffodils which the younger woman started picking for me.

"And the name of this house?" I asked.

"Wern," said the elder woman. "It's the name of a tree.[1] That one."

She pointed to one with what we call lambs' tails hanging from it. Not one of us could get the English name for it. I exhausted my slender stock. I still don't know what it was. All I do know is that this white-washed lonely house among the trees by the side of the brook is one of the most ghosty places I have ever seen, far more so than the D'Urberville house at Wool. Major Evans has only just acquired it in time. Parts of it already are in the kingdom of the rats; but it is not sinister, it is happily ghosty. I wish I'd lived there as a child. It breeds happy children.

The fact that New Quay is the home of bearded, retired sea-captains is sufficient proof of its fascination, for sea-captains are shrewd and know the world. Having visited Tahiti and crossed the Seven Seas, out of all the globe they choose New Quay for their lotus-eating days. It is indeed an Earthly Paradise, lying as it does on a hill-side that protects it from the southwest, with fine sands, a harbor like Clovelly, rocks to scramble over, an infinity of coast walks, and plenty of congenial society in its steep, well-populated streets.

We had our bread and cheese and pickles and beer, not here but in the kitchen of the "Pentre Arms" in the lonelier, lovelier cove of Llangranog a few miles further on, a place of hard sands between high rocks of curious curved shapes and sharp edges like slate under which run many caverns. The coast just here and at

Tresaith and Aberporth is exactly like that on the north coast of Cornwall, fine sandy coves between jagged, rocky headlands.

We then went on by way of Cardigan (where we found the churchyard locked against us), through Nevern (the bay of Newport, where there is a fine stretch of sand), and Dinas towards Fishguard. Here the country becomes much wilder. There are stone circles and craggy tors on the headlands and the hills. There are more one-storied cottages, and the population is much scantier. It resembles the country near Land's End. Fishguard itself is built practically all round the large harbor and looks prosperous. It is an excellent center for exploring the most rugged part of the coastline, and for climbing the strange Precelly Mountains, from which (you may remember) the stones of Stonehenge were hewn. Fishguard was the scene of a landing of the French in 1797, but the invaders were all captured, and only escaped because two Welsh girls fell in love with two of the prisoners and helped them all to get back to France on Lord Cawdor's private yacht.[2]

About the nature of the country between Fishguard and the Ultima Thule of Southwest Wales, St. David's, I can only conjecture, for a violent blizzard swept up from the southwest and I saw only the vague outlines of the tors of Carn Llidi and Carnedd Lleithr apparently sticking up out of the sea, and our own open defenseless road going on and on over the moors into the gray blinding rain.

I have never been more impressed by my first view of a cathedral. At one moment I was in an ordinary upland Welsh village, bare and bleak like St. Just, the

next I was looking down on the magnificent ruins of the Bishop's Palace, the slender tower of St. Mary's College (just like the tower of the college at Winchester), and the bluey-purple stone of the Cathedral itself, all lying together in a tiny green valley.

The interior of the Cathedral is glorious. Its floor slopes up at an absurd angle; its stout pillars lean outwards at an even more absurd angle; it is built in a marsh; it has suffered from an earthquake; the hoof-marks of Cromwell's horses may still be seen in the tiles; the bones of St. David are kept in a casket; there is a list of bishops right back to St. Patrick, and after the names of four consecutive bishops are red crosses and the word "slain," to show the treatment meted out in the tenth century by the Danish raiders. In rude Saxon characters on a Celtic Cross you may read the epitaph of one of these bishops and his two sons. Here are the tomb and brass of Henry II's father, the tomb and effigy of a benefactress who is still living, and a stall specially reserved for the King, who is a lay canon of this Cathedral. Wind and rain suit a place that has been through all that St. David's has endured.

Our way home lay along the coast road of St. Bride's Bay, through Solva, which has an S-shaped harbor exactly like Boscastle, with houses by the side of a stream running through a gorse-covered combe, by far the loveliest place, even in a storm, that I had seen that day; and then close by Roch Castle, a most unexpected, isolated pele tower built high on a rock in mid-field, reminding me that here, too, is a border, for I then passed into Pembrokeshire, the little England beyond Wales, where the Normans and Flemish founded and

kept alive an English-speaking colony which still flourishes. The very place-names suddenly all become English: Haroldston, Hodgeston, and Stepaside. I even passed through a village called Commercial. You couldn't ask for anything less Celtic than that. The country became more gentle. The gates were all painted red. The very soil was red, as red as it is in Devon. The churches began to show an amazing variety of architecture, especially in their towers and spires.

But our main interest lay in dodging the storm which was charging down on us from behind and from our right, blotting out every bit of the landscape in inky blackness. On the left there was a miraculous clearance, and we looked over a freshly-washed, green, undulating land with white houses to the Precelly hills, over which long rolls of white clouds seemed to have settled for the night. We ran into and out of hailstorms and whirlwinds which threatened to lift the car over the hedge. We crossed a marsh where the road and two bridges had been rudely disturbed by floods.

It was good but surprising to find on our arrival in Carmarthen that its old tree was still standing. When that falls, Carmarthen falls.

On Saturday my driver took me back to Pembrokeshire by way of the Towy estuary where the women gather cockles in plots divided off by sticks; to Llanstephan Castle, a huge, four-square ruin built on the top of a steep hill at the mouth of the Towy overlooking Carmarthen Bay and the Bristol Channel. Three times the Devonian de Camvilles were dispossessed of this stronghold by the Welsh princes, and indeed, its whole history has been troublous. It is now an ideal

place for those who like precarious climbing. Each tower has flight after flight of circular stone steps with no protecting rail or center post, so that if you slip your chance of escape is small. I clung to the wall edge and kept my eyes on the wall above.

The tops of the battlements and walls are also walkable, but narrow, and quite exciting enough for me. From these walls I looked down over the sands beyond two tiny sailing boats in the estuary, and the ghost of a four-masted wreck, to the dark, low-lying islands of the Mumbles and the thin, gray line of the coast of Devon. The piping cries of ringed-plover and oyster-catchers from the sands below were the only sounds I heard.

By devious by-roads (I have seldom seen such an intricate network of lanes) passing only a road-mender on a cart-horse, a postman on a hunter, an elderly gypsy selling clothes pegs, an old woman taking butter to market in a bucket, a boy taking the tirdieg (the ten o'clock meal) to the laborers in the fields, and a bull ("He was bought last Monday at Llandyss," said the driver) descending daintily from a cart—we came to Laugharne, which possesses a most picturesque churchyard, arranged in terraces among rocks overgrown with heliotrope, with an ancient yew on which foxes' heads used to be hung. It also has an ivy-covered, ruined castle standing above a tiny creek in which two small girls in red were playing among the drawn-up boats.

Then came the eight-mile stretch of Pendine Sands, on the hard, shell-sprinkled surface of which my driver laughingly let the car out. He then ran round in circles to show how little impression the wheels made on the sand.

The long yellow marram-grass banks at the back form an ideal camping-ground, and the endless stretch of sands make a heaven for children to play on.

Then came a series of steep switchback ups and downs through the beautifully named Red Roses to the submerged forest of Amroth and the yellow sands of Saundersfoot. We had our usual lunch at the usual price at the "Cambrian" Hotel, the proprietor kindly drawing a map of our afternoon run. Every meal I had on this trip cost exactly a shilling.

We had only time for one more castle in detail, so after making a dash for Pembroke, and looking across the Monkton Pill at the stupendous walls of that mighty shell, we raced back to Carew, which will, I think, remain in my mind forever as the castle of my dreams. I saw it first over the fields, a gray mass of vast walls and huge round towers at each of its four corners. It was only when I climbed over the wall into the water-meadow on which it is built that I saw that it was situated above a bend in a creek of Milford Haven, a quiet estuary in which a heron stood motionless as a stone, and on the other side was a mill, covered with yellow lichen.[3] An ancient man vaguely approached over the field and showed me the way in. I found myself facing a castle within a castle with immense shells of great mullioned windows.

Again, as at Llanstephan, there were circular stone steps leading up to the battlements, not quite so insecure though occasionally worn away to a narrowness which made me avoid looking down. Carew was the private seat of Gerald de Windsor, castellan of Pembroke Castle, a mighty man of valor, but like Menelaus and Cassio,

damned in a fair wife, for it was his fortune to marry the lovely Lady Nest, the Helen of Wales.

While she was held hostage for her father, Rhys ap Tudor, Prince of Deheubarth, in the court of Henry I, she became the King's mistress, and bore him a son, Henry Fitz Henry. The King then bestowed her on Gerald, who married her, and after bearing him several children (who became the great Fitzgeralds of Ireland), she was carried off—not unwillingly, it appears—by her cousin, Owen ap Cadogan, Prince of Powys, who was killed in a chance encounter on the wayside by the husband whom he had wronged. She afterwards married Stephen, Constable of Cardigan, and through this marriage became the mother of the Fitzstephens. It so happened, therefore, that the first Norman invasion of Ireland was conducted entirely by descendants of the Lady Nest. The Fitzgeralds later took the name of Carew, and the castle still remains in the possession of that family. On the village War Memorial I read among the names of those killed in the War that of Thomas Carew, Baron Kesteven.

The older remaining part of this lovely place is a thirteenth-century castle of one strong ward with drum towers at the corners, two of them strengthened by huge, projecting spurs. The main approach had an outlying base-court with a barbican inside. The Tudor west front with its huge mullioned windows was the work of Sir Rhys ap Thomas, who was the first to join Harry Richmond when he landed at Milford Haven.

In spite of the broken battlements festooned with ivy, and the empty mullioned windows silhouetted against the sky, the broken stone staircases, the roofless rooms,

I felt that Carew Castle is a living thing. It might so easily be peopled once again, and the Lady Nest seemed not far away. It struck me as even less derelict than Wern. There was a warm, human feeling about its grass courts and walls and towers that I can't in the least account for. It was not the jackdaws, for there were jackdaws at the Bishop's Palace at St. David's. Unlike the other great Pembrokeshire castles, it doesn't flaunt itself solely as a fortress. The mullioned windows speak of peace and a sense of domestic security, and one remembers not the unending feud between the races, but the seven days' tournament "seasoned with a diversity of musick for the honour of ladies," held here for a thousand participants in Sir Rhys's time. Its enormous size and its complete unobtrusive detachment from an outside world add to its strange fascination. It is a place to spend days in, not hours.

At its gates stands a richly ornate Celtic Cross, fourteen feet high, a fitting pendant to a really magnificent castle.

So rich is this district in castles that you might spend a month doing nothing else but climb their broken stairways and walk round their towers and battlements. It is equally rich in churches, so the lover of old buildings need look no further for his holiday.

The Stack rocks are haunted by thousands of guillemots and razor-bills. Inland I saw very few birds; not a single plover or curlew.

There are secluded bathing coves everywhere, and the bathing is safe and good.

In Carmarthen [4] itself you may still see the fishermen carrying on their backs the coracles of tarpaulin

stretched on wickerwork that the ancient Britons used to draw the sewin or delicate salmon trout from the Towy. Here you may also see, if your interests lead that way, a prison built by the man who built Buckingham Palace and the Brighton Pavilion. A strange trinity. Here too I saw the most Welsh sight of my tour, the slow procession of men in bowler hats and deepest mourning, walking, two by two, in front of a coffin. There were no women at all.

And here, most unexpectedly, lies the body of Sir Richard Steele, described on his monument as the "First Promoter of the Periodical Press in England"; I could wish that sentence had been left in Welsh. Poor Dicky Steele. What an epitaph!

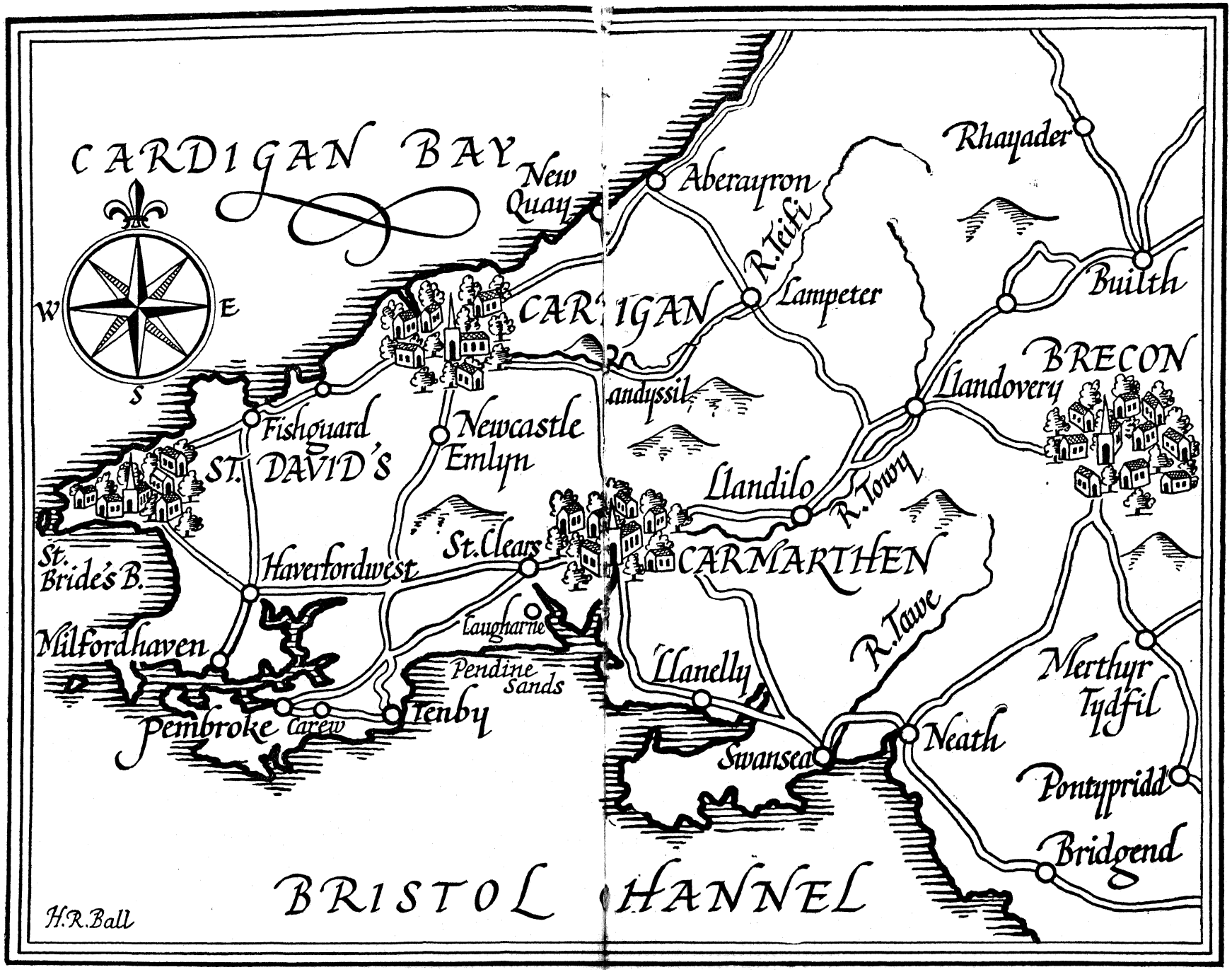
THE WAR SONG OF DINAS VAWR

The mountain sheep are sweeter,
 But the valley sheep are fatter;
We therefore deemed it meeter
 To carry off the latter.
We made an expedition;
 We met a host and quelled it;
We forced a strong position,
 And killed the men who held it.

On Dyfed's richest valley,
 Where herds of kine were browsing,
We made a mighty sally,
 To furnish our carousing.
Fierce warriors rushed to meet us;
 We met them and o'erthrew them;
They struggled hard to beat us;
 But we conquered them, and slew them.

As we drove our prize at leisure,
 The King marched forth to catch us;
His rage surpassed all measure,
 But his people could not match us.
He fled to his hall pillars;
 And, ere our force we led off,
Some sacked his house and cellars,
 While others cut his head off.

T. L. Peacock.


CARDIGAN BAY
New Quay
W
E
S
CARDIGAN
Aberayron
R. Teifi
Lampeter
Rhayader
Builth
BRECON
Llandovery
Llandilo
R. Towy
CARMARTHEN
R. Tave
Llanelly
Swansea
Neath
Merthyr Tydfil
Pontypridd
Bridgend
Fishguard
Newcastle Emlyn
ST. DAVID'S
St. Clears
Haverfordwest
St. Bride's B.
Milford haven
Laugharne
Pendine Sands
Tenby
Pembroke
Carew
BRISTOL CHANNEL
H.R.Ball

14. NORTH WALES

WHEN in a recent public examination, either for London County Council or Civil Service candidates, I forget which, I asked for information about Holyhead, opinion was more or less evenly divided. About 800 candidates assured me that Holyhead was in California. It was, they added, the home of Marlene Dietrich. About 800, with equal confidence, placed it in Scotland. Holyhead, they said, was the home of Mary Queen of Scots. An insignificant minority, without committing itself more precisely, with the obvious trepidation of the uncertain, risked the assertion that it was somewhere on the way to Ireland.

No single candidate claimed for it any virtue in itself. I assume, therefore, that Holyhead is comparatively unknown. As I stood on Holyhead quay watching the Irish boat set out into the teeth of that gale, I felt no regrets whatever at being left behind. I have memories of that crossing.

I turned light-heartedly into the comfortable Station Hotel thinking of George Borrow's reception there, and of that ancient servant who, while taking off the great man's square-toed, dusty boots reminded him of the two Anglesey poets, Gronwy Owen and Lewis Morris (the inspector of mines, who could build a ship and sail it,

frame a harp and play it, write an ode and set it to music). The night-porter last Friday made no effort to remove my boots or to remind me of local poets, but he brought me a glass of—what was it now? Oh, yes—hot milk.

"Anglesey," says George Borrow, "does not abound in the beauties of nature, but there never was such a place for poets: you meet a poet, or the birthplace of a poet everywhere."

It is as well perhaps that no two of us see with the same eyes. I met no poets in Anglesey, and no traces of poetry except on the purple slate tombstones which were indeed covered with verse, that may or may not have been good—it was in Welsh—but at every turn I met with fresh evidences of the beauties of nature and startling evidences of great antiquity. The long, low, gray battlemented church of St. Gybi, built on the site of a sixth-century monastery, and hidden behind a churchyard wall that was built by the Romans, is typical of Holyhead's blend of age and beauty.

I climbed up the sides of the Holyhead mountain, which is a solid mass of gray, speckled, serpentine rock looking just like lizard skin, standing 720 feet above the water. There I found Caswallon's 1,400-year-old wall, and gazed down on the white spray of waves leaping over the breakwater below, the black trail of smoke (far out on the gray horizon) of the incoming morning boat, and the low lying, wicked-looking island rocks of the Skerries lying off Carmel Head. On a clear day I have seen the Isle of Man and the mountains of County Down from here, but Friday was not clear. The sea was troubled, gray, murky, and full of white horses;

the wind was high, and sudden veils of rain kept sweeping over and obliterating vast tracks of ocean.

I climbed down on the further side to look at the South Stack, which is a collection of white-washed cottages and a lighthouse perched on the top of an island rock connected with the mainland by a tiny red suspension-bridge. On these rocks collect battalions of seabirds, every variety of gull, guillemots, cormorants and even, so I'm told, the peregrine.[1] All my life I've been looking for the peregrine and I've still never seen one outside Regent's Park. I saw nothing rarer than a kestrel on the South Stack.

But within a few hundred yards I saw something very rare indeed. On a sunny south-facing bank, in a field of gorse, protected from north and west by the rocky mountain, lies an ancient Irish settlement, a collection of some twenty horseshoe shaped hut-circles, each with a narrow entrance leading into an enclosure about fifteen feet across, surrounded by a low stone wall covered with smooth turf and pink stone-crop or other rock plant, about a foot and a half wide.

Inside these warm nests lay lambs so newly born that they didn't even move at my approach. From here I looked out over Carnarvon Bay to the gray masses of the mighty hills of North Wales, dwindling from the giants whose heads were hidden in the clouds, to the lower peaks of the Rivals on the long peninsula of Lleyn, and then eventually ending in the rock of Bardsey Island. The Lleyn Peninsula is the Lyonesse of North Wales, saint-haunted, remote, and very beautiful.

These ancient settlers invariably chose homes with superb views.

The very fact that Anglesey is so rich in cromlechs (there are nearly thirty of these flat tombstones raised on other stones), long barrows of the Stone Age, and round barrows of the Bronze Age, and the very fact that it was the great stronghold of the Druids (who made their last stand here against the Romans) is in itself proof enough that the island is full of natural beauty. Where there is great antiquity there is nearly always great beauty.

Its beauty must have been even greater when all its scores of windmills were working. The island is still full of windmills, but most of them are derelict. I must have passed at least a couple of dozen during the day, but not one of them was in use. When they flourished, poetry flourished; when they died, poetry died. A strange chance.

One of the most happily situated windmills is that at Trearrdur, a place of which I find it difficult to speak with moderation. It is the dream seaside holiday resort. It is, roughly, a southwest-facing bay of firm sands, with about a dozen little private sandy coves, each cut off from the next by the jolliest sorts of low rocks, on which children might scramble forever with perfect safety and without exhausting their charms. Whichever way the wind is blowing you can get out of it. If there is any sun in the sky you can be sure of being able to sit in it, or out of it, as you please. It is an ideal place for messing about in boats. It is so secluded that, in spite of the high gale and the angry sea outside, I saw three ducks swimming in the bay. I have never before seen ducks on the sea at all.[2] There is a golf-links among the gorse and rocks, and a large white hotel standing a

little way back. Several of the coves have houses built on the rocks right above the water; and Holyhead is only a mile away.

After leaving Trearrdur I crossed over from Holy Island—Holyhead and Trearrdur are on an island by themselves—and plunged into the heart of Anglesey to see the island water of Llyn Ilywenan, a reed-covered, shallow lake with a sandy bottom, the nesting place of black-headed gulls.

The surface of the water and the air above were both thronged with birds. There were wild duck flying over, wild swans sedately floating, and a thousand gulls screaming among the yellow rushes.

Anglesey has about twenty of these inland lakes among the fields, but this particular one is the home of a yellow bird (the name of which I don't know) that lives under the water and is to be found nowhere else in Britain—or is it in the world?

Close by the side of the lake is an old water-mill, inside which I found an old man controlling a vast machine of cylinders which was teasing out wool and turning it into flannel. It was exactly like the mill at Otterburn, but this man had no English, and his glowing explanations in Welsh were lost on me. All I know is that fleece is full of oil. I discovered that for myself.

As I crossed the island toward Cemaes Bay, I again caught sight of the Welsh Mountains, and now the clouds had lifted high enough for me to see, not a vague cardboard ridge of gray, but streaks of snow running down their sides like crystallized salt tears. Their mighty tops were still enshrouded, but sudden shafts of sunlight penetrated the clouds, and lit up here and there

a whole mountainside. Then a yellow light from behind would throw up the black silhouette of a special peak, and at last I was able to pick out Snowdon and realize for the first time in my life that its actual summit seen from twenty miles is like a toy Matterhorn, an exquisitely symmetrical white pinnacle.

This gave me an aspect of Anglesey to which I had not before been fully alive. The island itself is open country, a soft Arcadia without trees and without hills. This in itself makes it not only an admirable foil to the mountains, but the best possible place from which to appreciate the grandeur of their contours.

All the time the hills beckon to us to leave these comfortable winding lanes in which sheep and cattle stray to their hearts' content; to abandon the tight little island of white farms, prosperous gray villages, and small fields dotted with black cattle, ancient gray stones and flaming gorse, and explore their primeval vastness.

But Anglesey has its compelling power too. There is, for instance, its north coast, the cliff scenery of which is as rugged and grand as that of north Cornwall.

At Cemlyn I found a narrow gray arc of beach with an oyster-shaped bay on one side of it and an inland lake full of wild duck on the other. Here was just one farm, the inhabitants of which were knocking together a tin hut in the garden to live in when they let their home in the summer. The next village, Cemaes, has much more accommodation. There is a tiny harbor, above which clusters a number of gray houses looking over the bay to a fine headland. I explored this headland and found an ancient church at Llanbadrig, perched so close to the cliffs that the discarded wreaths,

thrown over the churchyard wall, bedeck the very sides of the rocks until the sea leaps up mercifully and washes them away.

As I walked from here along the cliff to Bull Bay by way of Hell's Mouth, I got an increasing sense of wild exhilaration from watching the breakers below rush with a roar up twenty tiny ravines between great vertical slabs of rock, of the strangest hue—a lime-juice colored green.

I lay on the heather under the gorse in the sun, and listened to the booming thud of the waves crashing against the walls of the caves underneath, and mingling with that music was the unceasing song of larks overhead. Out at sea a tiny coaster pitched and tossed and chugged its way along towards Liverpool.

The track ran just above and round about a dozen precipitous, inaccessible coves, and always the rocks seemed to be changing color, garlanded with glistening olive sea-weed at their base, and then rising dry, with veins of opal and azure, of gold and scarlet, but mainly of these quite eerie streaks of lime-juice colored green. Even the distant island of Middle Mouse, looking just like a dun-colored mouse in the sea, had a yellow tide-line.

Beyond Bull Bay I came to Amlwch, a gray, derelict harbor hewn out of solid rock, with water the color of yellow ochre, and row upon row of roofless, windowless, gray cottages on the wharf, a wind-mill without sails or cupola, a deserted water-mill, a tumbledown lime-kiln, and, among the ruins, knots of dejected-looking men loitering, waiting for Heaven knows what. It is a sort of Pompeii.

I once met an aged woman among these ruins with a marmoset on her shoulders, and she told me that it lived solely on a diet of brandy.

This side of Amlwch gives me the impression of a town that has been unexpectedly bombed, and is still rather dazedly wondering whether the bombers are coming back. Quite another Amlwch greets you as you turn your back on the sea and face the Parys Mountain. Here copper has been mined ever since the Romans sunk their shafts, and the hillside is now a place of yellow dumps standing above blood-red lakes where the copper oxide deposits collect.

After passing a few more villages, with wide, sandy bays I came to the gates of Beaumaris Castle, every stone of which, according to Thomas Gray, "records a sigh, a murder or a groan," for it was here that the Welsh Bards were massacred in 1296.

It was in a happy mood on Friday. The sun shone on the wide water of the moat, two small boys were chasing each other round the top of its outer walls, and the laughter of schoolgirls echoed from the battlements of the inner towers round the smooth lawns. It has been so well restored by the Office of Works that one can wander all round the top of the bulwarks, climb the circular stone stairs of nearly all the towers, and wander along the dark and narrow galleries that are built in the actual thickness of the walls. I got a fine view of the Great Orme's Head, the menacing mass of Penmaenmawr that so frightened Dr. Johnson, and the mountains on the other side of the Straits. All the other castles that I have visited lately have been haunted by

jackdaws. Beaumaris had no jackdaws. It is the playground of wagtails, and a bed of wallflowers.

The way along the Menai Straits is the only really wooded part of Anglesey. Here are the big country-houses. Bangor, half hidden in its afternoon blue haze, clinging to the foot of the white mountains just across the narrow strip of water, looked like a city of fairy-land.

I went on past the two great bridges that span the Straits, past the island churchyard that has the longest place-name in the world, past the wall of the Marquis of Anglesey's park—almost long enough to write the name of that place on it—and so came to Bryn-Siencyn where I caught my first glimpse of the high, octagonal, gray towers of Carnarvon Castle across the water, and got my best view of the day of the black ravine of Llanberis Pass.

I could now easily distinguish on its snowy sides the line of the railway up Snowdon, though the summit was hidden for the night under its cap of still cloud. As I sat on the wall and looked up I thought of the first time I climbed it, alone in a blizzard, from Gorphwsfa at the age of fifteen, in the month of February, and how terrified I was as I slid about in the snow—I find myself still alternately crying with delight and crying with fright on the tops of these hills. I thought of the last time I was up there at four o'clock on a June morning in blinding rain searching in vain, but by no means alone, for a total eclipse of the sun which only succeeded in shedding a dreadful purple light and ghastly sense of chill over the mountain. It still remains for me to see the sun rise from the summit. But even that will

not excel the view of it and of the whole Carnarvonshire range as I saw it from Bryn Seincyn last Friday evening. I am not in the least surprised that the ancient races of Anglesey chose this as their chief burial-ground. For their home after death, as well as before, they chose the places of the greatest beauty.

After seeing the sun set over the sea from Rhosneigr, a place of broad sands and tiny rocky islands, I completed my circle of Anglesey, and went to Bangor by the last train. I have a great affection for Bangor, the birthplace of the great poet Taliesin, though I strongly dislike its cathedral bell, which rings the quarters through the night. It is the only city I know which possesses a stone circle right in the middle of the town. Its Bishop was once ransomed for two hundred hawks; its bookshops are filled with books in Welsh; mainly, I imagine, theological; its University, which stands handsomely above it on a hill, permeates it with a pleasantly academic atmosphere.

In the market I detected several Borrovian characters, but the only girl I talked to not only spoke English, but prided herself on being able to spell "Mediterranean." "I can spell anything English," she said.

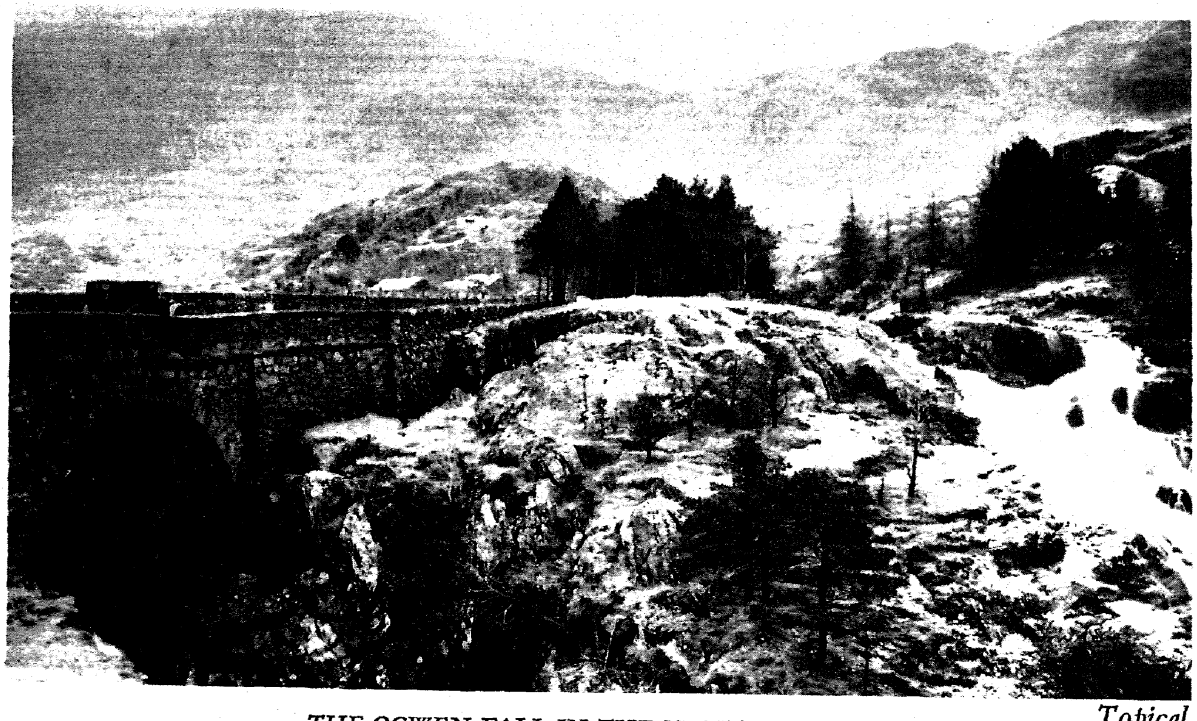
The hotel in which Borrow stayed, the "Albion," still stands, and probably has altered little since his day.

Bangor is easily the best center from which to explore the mountains, if only because of its bus service, which is excellent. On my bus, the next day, there were farmers with black Welsh sheepdogs, and two girl undergraduates, dressed for wet weather. They warned me that the hills were not going to be at their best.



Valentine

TRYFAN AND LLYN OGWEN



THE OGWEN FALL IN THE NANT FFRANCON

Topical

As we came up the wooded Ogwen Valley into Bethesda, I could see that they were right. The mists were so low that they even hid the higher terraces of the vast slate quarries. Bethesda is at the foot of one of the finest passes in Britain, a flourishing town of many chapels, handsome miners, and modern shops. Its slate-quarries are as imposing as the mountains themselves. Then came the long climb up Nant Ffrancon, with the winding water in the brown, wide, treeless valley below and long white ribbons of waterfalls spilling into it down the steep sides of mountains wrapped in swirling mists. Giant bowlders hung perilously above the road.

My intention was to get out of the bus at Llyn Ogwen and climb the Glyders by way of the great gash of Twll Ddu, the Devil's Kitchen, one of the best scrambles in North Wales, but when I reached the shores of the mile-long lake the steam from the hellish cauldron hid mountain, kitchen, and even the track up to Llyn Idwal, over which no bird will ever fly since Prince Idwal's murder.

It was no use attempting to climb. Above the 1,000-foot level the clouds reigned, and they were not clouds you could rise above in 3,000 feet. I stayed in the bus. Half a dozen sturdy girls, determined to walk somewhere, joined me and we drove on along the shores of a lake whose black waters were now being thrashed to white by the fury of the wind. The immense bowlders of Tryfan loomed menacingly out of the mist overhead, as black as a thundercloud. Then we crossed the top of the watershed, and began the gentle descent along the upper part of the Llugwy to Capel Curig, whose many

hotels and lodging-houses seemed to be very full of activity.

The valley after this became densely wooded, and the river flowed under high crags. At the Swallow Falls I got out of the bus and scrambled down to the water-side to look up at a tremendous cascade that is of an odd green color and falls over three stupendous chasms. The ghost of Sir John Wynne can still be heard moaning here.

The hillside is green with newly-planted young trees. There were any number of tracks for walkers. At gray Bettws-y-coed I waited restlessly on the bridge above the tumbling waters for the bus to pick me up on its return journey. I wanted to see if the mists had risen. I had set my heart on climbing the Glyders, but it was now raining even in the valley, and the clouds were lower. But you never know with mountains. Exactly as the bus regained the desolate shore of Llyn Ogwen I had an amazing bit of luck. Quite suddenly the sun broke through the clouds on the right, and the mists cleared altogether off the top of Tryfan, revealing that superb 3,000-foot pyramid of bare and rugged, apparently inaccessible rock, in all its grandeur, even to the two pillars on the summit, which so closely resemble successful climbers. The temptation to get out and dash up while it was clear was irresistible, but, even as I looked, the clouds swept over it once more and I was left peering into the white mists. The Glyders were not going to uncover that day. It is perhaps a tiny consolation to think that they can't have been visible since.

The strangest thing about this district is the quickness with which it changes from the wild and savage

to the smooth and gentle. Within a few minutes of leaving this really awe-inspiring land of mist-shrouded mountains we were down in the valley again with lambs in the pasture, and, in a quarter of an hour, besieged by Bethesda quarrymen going home to dinner and their Saturday afternoon in the allotments. This is one of the great charms of North Wales. You can have all the wildness you want and yet regain civilization almost at once if too much wildness bewilders you.

It is only five hours from London, and there is certainly no wilder country within twice the distance in any other direction.

"With the woman one loves, with the friend of one's heart, and a good library of books, one may pass an age here and think it a day," said Lord Lyttleton of this country.

Even without the woman one loves, without the friend of one's heart, or without any books at all one might pass an age here and think it a day—if one is, as I am, and I hope you are—a lover of the high hills.


IRISH SEA
Carmel Head
Cemlyn Bay
Cemaes Bay
Amlwch
Parys Mountain
HOLYHEAD BAY
Holyhead
Llyn Llywenan
ANGLESEY
Great Ormes Hd.
Puffin Is
CONWAY BAY
Beaumaris
Rhosneigr
Bangor
Bethesda
River Conway
Brym Sienam
Caernarvon
Nant Ffrancon
Llyn Ogwen
Tryfan
Capel Curig
Swallow Falls
Glyder fawr
Glyder fach
Bettws y Coed
Snowdon
CAERNARVON BAY
H.R.Ball

15. BERWICK AND THE BORDER

THE fact that Berwick is on the Border is enough in itself to make it a city of wild romance. The very word "Border" is magical. It releases from the recesses of the mind snatches of old ballads of haunting loveliness—this sort of thing:

"*Janet has kilted her green kirtle*
A little abune the knee,
And she has snooded her yellow hair
A little abune her bree;
And she is on to Miles Cross
As fast as she can hie."

It conjures up pictures of a fair land of meadows and smooth hills, with grim, gray, high, windowless peel towers standing above the banks of broad rivers, of fierce raiders seeking to harry their foes across the Border in exactly the same high-spirited way that a schoolboy still seeks to humble a rival behind the fives-court or chapel, always obeying the unwritten laws of chivalry.

"Ferocity with fairness" seems to have been the Border motto, and always behind the clash of arms you can hear the song of fairy. And Berwick is more than on the Border. It is the Border; strategically the Calais

of Scotland. Berwick won, Scotland won; Berwick lost, Scotland lost. So the shuttlecock town was tossed to and fro, no less than thirteen times in the three hundred years before its final capture in 1482 by Edward IV. It is not surprising that no single medieval building still stands. It reveals its haggard history more by its absences than by these presents. The very fact that its church was entirely rebuilt in Commonwealth times is significant. Do you know another church in England built between 1648 and 1652? I don't.[1]

The railway station is the site of the Great Hall where Edward I decided, in 1291, that John Baliol was the rightful King of Scotland. Above it, in full public gaze, the Countess of Buchan was exposed for six years in a wooden cage for daring to put the crown on Robert the Bruce's head. A mile or two away stands Halidon Hill, where six earls (the very flower of Scotland's nobility, Lennox, Ross, Carrick, Sutherland, Monteith and Athol) fell in a single day. Berwick has been burnt and reburnt; her streets have run with blood. She bore the full brunt of all the Scottish wars. The result is the usual one; her character is strong, her beauty austere and majestic, her kindliness that of one who has suffered greatly.

I shall not forget that first sight of her seen from the south, a gray city of red roofs set steeply on a hill on the other side of the black, broad Tweed, spanned by three tiers of bridges, each one setting off the perfection of the others, like the "Carnation, lily, lily, rose" of Sargent. Lowest and nearest the sea lies the oldest, the fifteen-arched stone bridge; above it rises the new, handsome, concrete Tweed bridge of the Great

North Road, and high above the valley soars the slender arcs of the railway viaduct. No ancient houses remain, but the narrow, dark, cobbled, high-walled wynds and courts still stand, and the ancient city gates, and most impressive of all, the Elizabethan walls with their immense four-square projections of grass-covered bastions at each corner.

I saw wild-eyed children chasing each other over these bastions with a zest that betrayed the purity of their ancestry. These were true Borderers. Lovers were leaning over the parapets in the shadows looking out beyond fields full of footballers and golfers to the sea-cliffs and the sands of Tweedmouth. Business men were returning to homes, the doors of which opened right on to the wall-tops. I watched fishermen disappear through the dark hole of the Sally Port under the walls to the wharf side. I found other, older fishermen standing on the grassy banks of the other older, fragmentary, Edwardian walls, close by their low-roofed cottages on the Greenses. They were looking sadly down on a sea that no longer provides them with a livelihood.

"There's no' a herrin'-boat in a' Northumberland today," said one. "It's a sad time." But not for farmers.

I attended both the fat stock and the lean stock markets in Berwick. I saw one hundred and forty-seven fat cattle and five hundred and seventy-eight fat sheep descend delicately from their lorries with the slightly self-conscious look of those who drive four-in-hand to Ascot. They were all sold. I lost count of the lean kine. They were nearly all plain, small, hardy, black cattle from the west of Ireland who lay down on the open stones and awaited their fate without fuss, unlike the

larger, more fidgety English who expressed their dislike of the pens by panicking in groups and bellowing angrily. A farmer in bowler-hat [2] and perfectly polished black boots approached me.

"Buying, I hope?" he said.

I blushed with pride at being mistaken for any one so important.

"Merely curious," I replied, and added by way of excuse:

"From the South."

He smiled.

"I could tell that from your voice."

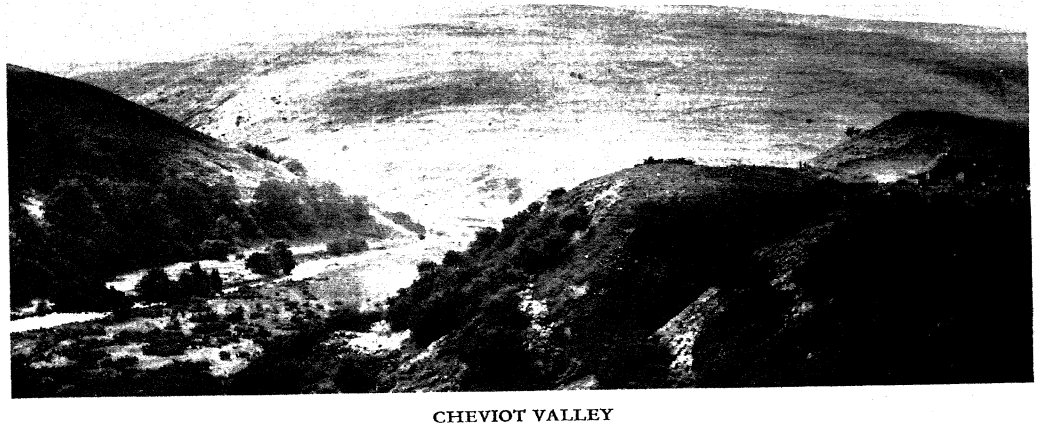
I felt humbled. Apparently I was all right till I opened my mouth. I reversed Boswell's apology to Dr. Johnson.

"I do indeed come from the South," I said, "but I cannot help it."

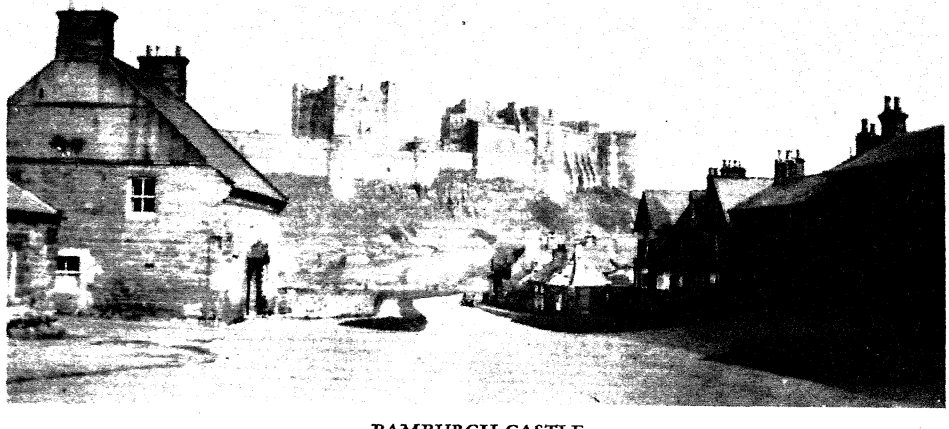
Being a Northerner, and therefore compact of courtesy, he refrained from the Johnsonian retort: "That, Sir, I find is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help." Instead he turned to the cattle.

"The English can't stand the market," he said. "They catch a chill so easily. Too much indoors. Those Irish fellows'll stand anything. They're out all the year." I looked up at him to make sure. He *seemed* to be talking about the cattle. A small cowherd in an enormous cap gave me his program. He didn't even stay to be thanked.

I left the market in order to see the land on which these animals graze. The fields were almost overcrowded with black-faced, long-fleeced Northumbrian sheep with their new families of lambs frisking about all over the place. Nearly every field had its pen of straw-covered hurdles to protect the lambing mothers from



CHEVIOT VALLEY



BAMBURGH CASTLE

the wind. Nearly every field had its shepherd or farmer keeping an eye on things. On most of the arable land the plow was at work. Each great, gray farm was surrounded by a suburb of round ricks and out-houses. The Borderland is busy, even if the North Sea is slack.

After some ten miles of this pleasant undulating country of grazing land and plow, I came to an open curlew-haunted moor and looked across a wide valley to the shining roofs of gray Wooler standing on the side of the black, smooth Cheviots, whose higher slopes were snow-covered and tops hidden under the clouds. I penetrated to the very heart of these hills by way of a narrow, rough, hedgeless track that followed an amber-colored water to Longleeford, where I looked up to the snow-peppered round summit of Hedgehope on one side and the first terrace of the 2,600-foot Cheviot on the other. The rest of him was still cloud-capped.

I ought to have gone on over the top and down by way of Hen Hole to the College Valley—the climb is very easy except for a boggy bit at the top, but there was obviously going to be no view, so I went round by way of Kirknewton, above which stands Yeavering Bell, a thousand-foot brown knoll on which are hut circles and a British camp, and went up the College Valley instead of down it. This gives a finer view of Cheviot, for it reveals his great granite ravines and waterfalls. The valley itself is treeless, and contains about three good houses, a winding peat-water and a very rough track.

After a mile or two of this I came down again and went on round the foot of the hills, all of which are isolated, smooth, rounded, comfortable-looking knolls

of about a thousand feet, their sides dotted with handsome farms. Whatever else the Cheviots are, they are not frightening. They are placid and friendly like the West Ireland cattle, and like them, sturdy.

As we passed over a quite insignificant shallow stream my driver said quietly: "That was the Border. We're in Scotland." I felt for my passport, looked out for gendarmes, a flag, a notice-board. There was nothing. The surface of the Roxburghshire road was blacker than that of Northumberland. That was all.

I had barely time to recover from this unexpected crossing before the car stopped outside a black and white thatched inn facing a village green, the "Border" Hotel, Kirk Yetholm,[3] standing under a one thousand feet hill, called Staerough (pronounced Stirrup). After about a quarter of an hour's scrambling I was on the top of this grass-covered crag and was rewarded with a tremendous view. Eastward I could see over the rich fields as far as the North Sea. On the south stood the great barrier of the Cheviots, brown and smooth and rounded, except for the long, black hump of Cheviot himself, now free of cloud, but still lightly peppered with snow. Westward I could see the rain falling as far away as the Lead Hills, and northward beyond the three peaks of the blue Eildons rose the Lammermuirs and the fields of Berwickshire.

When I got back to the inn the daughter of the house —a smiling, attractive, Eton-cropped girl, with a soft, friendly voice—told me that she made a point of climbing the Cheviot at least once a month alone, a twenty-four-mile walk. She pronounced it Cheeviot, and her pronunciation is good enough for me. She asked me if

I'd seen the Palace of the King of the Gypsies. "They've been here since 1449," she said. "The last of them, Queen Esther Faa Blythe Rutherford, was buried here forty-nine years ago. The Faas have always been famous. There was Johnny Faa, the gypsy laddie who ran away with the Earl of Cassill's lady—you remember?

"The gipsies they came to my lord Cassill's yett,
And O! But they sang bonnie;
They sang sae sweet and sae complete,
That down came our fair ladie.
Will ye go with me, my hinny and my heart?
Will you go with me, my dearie?
And I will swear by the staff of my spear,
That your lord shall nae mair come near thee.

"You remember how Johnnie and his men were caught and hanged upon the Dule Tree in front of the Earl's lady?" I nodded. She went on excitedly. "Then there was Meg Merrilees, who married Patrick Faa and tracked her son's murderer all over the Continent until she saw him hanged at Jedburgh Gallow Hill. She was beaten to death at Carlisle as a Jacobite. Some of the men still use a few Romany words. In the bar sometimes they'll say, 'Pass the pani,' when they mean water, and it took me some time to get used to being called 'hen.' When they first saw me going off on a motor-bike they used to say the 'manishee's ranking' (the girl's enjoying herself). They're an awfully clannish lot now, keen on their jugles and casties (dogs and sticks), fond of bargaining and fecking a swishy here and there, but they used to be rougher. They used to jab each other in the

side with little steel harpoons, called 'jaggers.' I believe there's still one in existence, at the smithy at Town Yetholm."

I crossed the river and in the smithy found an incredibly handsome, swarthy, young, giant blacksmith chatting with three other dark young giants with scarves round their necks. They roared with laughter at my request to see a "jagger"—but an old man with light blue eyes sitting in the shadows came out, took me across to his cottage without a word, unlocked a trunk, and in a little box which contained a bronze devil and a huge tooth, he pulled out a vicious prong about three and a half inches long stuck in a cork. The smith and his friends, who had followed us into the cottage, craned over to have a look. Pressing it into my hand the old man said: "There you are, I'll give it you. I'll soon be in my grave, and I've had it over sixty years. You may need it, I shan't." He insisted on my taking it.

We drove on to Kelso, a sweet and gentle gray town on the banks of the Tweed, with a view of the Duke of Roxburgh's many-windowed Castle of Floors, the shell of a very high, sandstone Abbey, and a great, cobbled market-square. It was here that Sir Walter Scott first read Percy's "Reliques" and first met young Ballantyne with whom his fortunes were afterwards so inextricably mixed.

We drove past the mound of what was once the mighty castle of Wark where occurred the incident that led to the institution of the Order of the Garter, and so came to that lonely cross raised on granite blocks in the middle of a plowed field below a green knoll that bears just these words:

"FLODDEN 1513. TO THE BRAVE OF BOTH NATIONS."

Larks sang overhead—I've not heard before so many laverocks at once—there was a laborer singing as he plowed, lambs lay basking in the sun, plover were wheeling and dipping over the meadows, and rooks were somewhere chattering. Away in the distance the Eildons looked bluer than ever, and the whole rich land lay smiling in the embrace of the sun. A more peaceful or serene resting-place for the brave I have never seen.

The next morning I went to Bamburgh, one of the noblest of all castles to look at (built as it is on a high, isolated rock of whinstone above the sand-dunes), at least a quarter of a mile long and one hundred and fifty feet high. It is one of the oldest in the country, the Joyous Garde, so they say, where Sir Lancelot came to die, the home of the lovely princess who had been turned into a "laidley worm" by her stepmother until her brother rescued her and turned the Queen into a toad which still lives at the bottom of the castle well. King Ida founded the citadel in 547.

It was here that King Eadwine was converted to Christianity, from here that Northumbria was governed for two hundred and fifty years, here that Edward II fled for shelter after Bannockburn, here that Henry VI lived for a year before the battle of Hexham, and from here that Dorothy Forster started out to rescue her Jacobite brother from Newgate.

As the bus-driver told me that it was only open on Thursdays, I passed the notice "Grounds closed" with some misgiving, but at the castle gates all the caretaker said was, "Do you mind if I have my dinner first?" In

some places I should have been greeted with a curt, "Can't you read?" But this is Northumbria, the Border, where all men are courteous.

On that same day I saw a road-mender remove stones out of the way of a car, a bus-conductor wipe the window so that a woman could see out, and when at the "Crewe Arms," a passing stranger announced that his hat had blown off somewhere on the sand-dunes, he was assured that it would be recovered and sent on to him.

At one o'clock I reclimbed the castle by way of steep steps up the black, grass-covered cliff and through a narrow high cleft of the rock. School children were clambering about with the surefootedness of mountain goats. To my surprise I found that the castle was let off by Lord Armstrong into flats for summer visitors. What an enchanting holiday one could have with the vast sands below, the islands over the sea, and the castle, or a bit of it, for one's very own. I was shown the stone-vaulted armory, the well of the laidley worm story. I passed through a succession of high-ceilinged rooms with powder-closets let in the thick walls. I wandered round battlements and across mighty deserted courts and into the high King's Hall which is hung with old masters.

I felt exactly as if I were at Windsor until I climbed to the top of the pink sandstone keep and looked out over the sand-dunes and the sands to the cluster of twenty-six little, low, black Farne Islands, once the retreat of saints and now the sanctuary of sea-birds. On its isolated rock across the bay rose, dimly but valiantly, the tiny fortress castle of Lindisfarne and, below it,

Holy Island's ruined Priory.[4] On one side lies the restless North Sea, on the other rise the Black Cheviots. Yes, Bamburgh is vast as Windsor is vast, but its setting far excels that Royal Castle of the south.

After seeing Grace Darling's tomb in the churchyard (yet another testimony to the chivalry and courage until death of this noble race), I went on to the "Plough" Inn at Beal, where a boy instantly volunteered to telephone over to the island for a car. To reach an island by motor is, for me, a unique experience. In a quarter of an hour there arrived a rusty, rattling, open Ford tied together with bits of string, and as we deserted the road for an apparently endless stretch of wide, wet sands, the wild-eyed, flaxen-haired driver talked about the action of sea-salt on hand-brakes. I began to understand the absence of more shining motors. These sands are covered by the sea to a depth of ten feet at high tide. We passed a few lumbering carts full of barrels of crabs, and two strange-looking, big basket-huts perched on poles above the sands, accessible by ladders.

"In case you get caught by the tide," explained the driver. "It comes up quickly."

That may explain why I saw no one walking. Eventually we came to a long, low line of sand-dunes and at the farthest edge of the island a cluster of houses, and a road on which nothing stirred. The silence after the mainland was exactly like that of Mürren in the snow. It is odd how one misses traffic.

This island, the cradle of Christianity in England, was the retreat chosen by St. Aidan for the see of his bishopric on leaving Iona. It was here that the body of St. Cuthbert rested after his death in 687 until, at the

Danish invasion, it started on its strange and adventurous journey which ended ultimately in Durham.

There now remains a sturdy village of five or six streets, peopled by Kyles, Binghams, Bells and Cromartys; a ruined, sandstone Priory with one perfect high arch; and, across a tiny bay, an amazing sixteenth-century fortress castle built on the summit of a black basalt rock called Beblowe. This is the only rock on the island, hardened lava ejected from the volcano Cheviot. Its cracked sides are covered with red stone-crop. To reach the castle I had to climb up a steep stone path to a portcullis, then pass under an arch and double back up further steps to a terrace on which doves were playing.

Beblowe is a much more primitive castle than Bamburgh, and of course tiny by comparison, but even more magical. It is the kind of fairy fortress that we all draw as children, all crag and turrets, and, apparently, quite inaccessible. Narrow passages cut in the solid rock lead from one part of the house to another. All the stone steps are hollowed out by the tread of countless feet. The main rooms are stone vaulted, the walls, as befits a fortress, are of a great thickness, while from the top I looked out over the Farne Islands and Bamburgh, and down on the island below. There was one man plowing, and one fisherman came whistling over the beach on which were a number of tarred boat-sheds shaped like upturned trawlers. I also saw a small lake and a flower garden, walled off at the end of a field full of Highland cattle. There was also one invisible curlew.

The main difficulty about Lindisfarne was to find an inn for tea where there was a fire, for the wind was keen.

Eventually I found what I desired at the "Iron Rails" Inn in a spotless warm room full of rare birds' eggs. A small girl with the almost white hair of the Danes sang a delightful song outside, about the merry, merry men. My driver was puzzled by our reckoning of times.

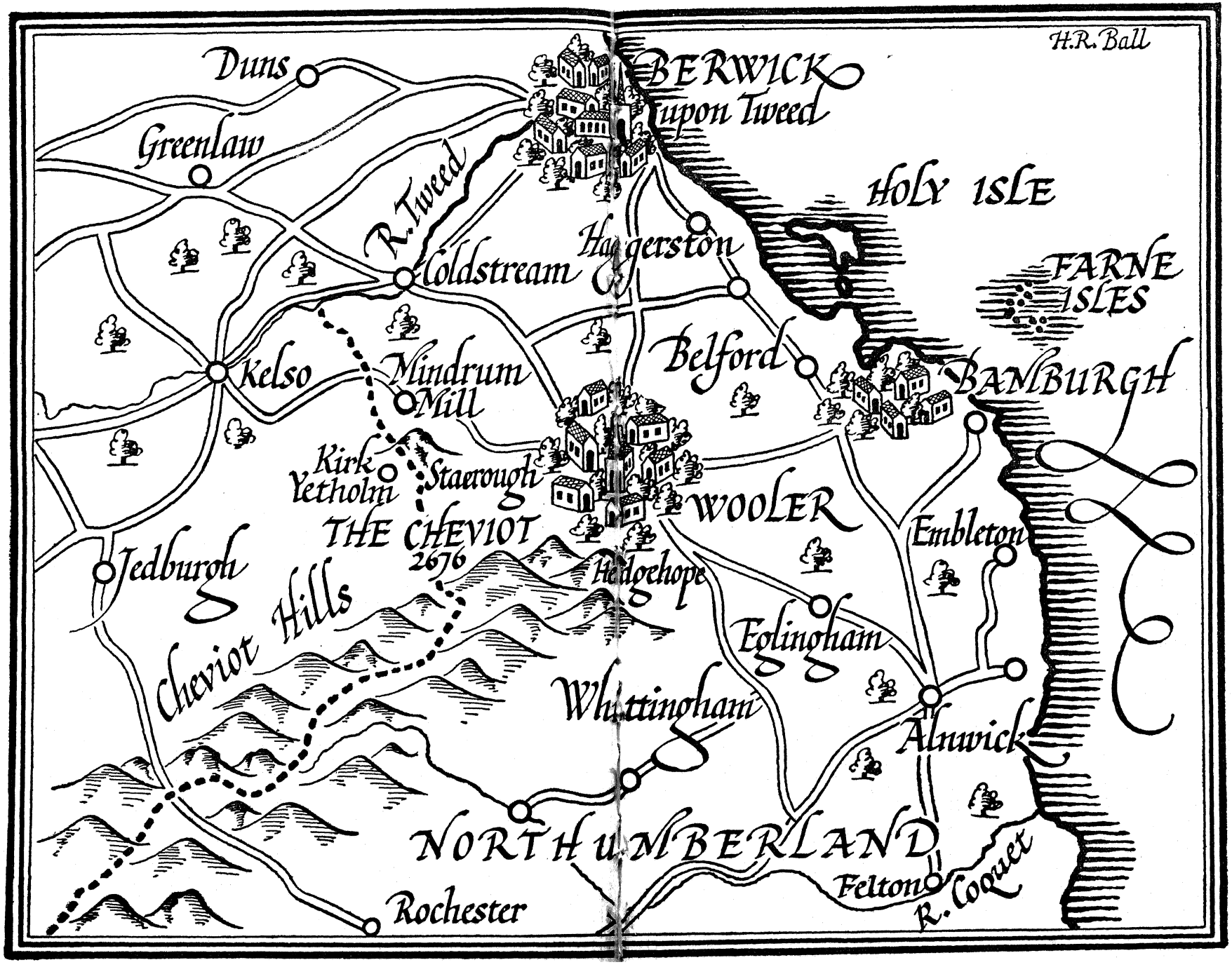
"I want to catch the 5.39 at Beal," I said.

"And what time might that be?" he asked.

How glorious to live on an island where time matters as little as that. Perhaps that explains why they have no need of a policeman.

But it doesn't explain their extraordinary courtesy.

On a tablet to the memory of the late Master of Balliol in Bamburgh Church I read the words, "He loved this place." It would be hard to refuse one's love to a place so beautful, or to a people in whom the knightly virtues are so strongly marked. And one's love is mingled with humility. I wish I were a Borderer.[5]


H.R. Ball
Duns
BERWICK
upon Tweed
Greenlaw
R. Tweed
HOLY ISLE
Haggerston
Coldstream
FARNE
ISLES
Belford
Kelso
Mindrum
Mill
BAMBURGH
Kirk
Yetholm
Staerough
WOOLER
THE CHEVIOT
2676
Embleton
Jedburgh
Hedgehope
Cheviot Hills
Eglingham
Whittingham
Alnwick
NORTHUMBERLAND
Felton
R. Coquet
Rochester

16. THE NORTHERN HIGHLANDS

THE best center, by far, for the wildest and grandest scenery in Britain is Inverness, a fourteen hours' journey from Euston. Most people do this journey by night, but my love for Edinburgh is so strong that I find it impossible to go north without paying a call on Auld Reekie. If I ever lived in a city I should live in Edinburgh, for it is the only town I know where you can both see the hills and smell the sea in the main streets. And its interests are my interests—books in the open air.

The excitement of the second stage of the journey begins as the train winds its way up the treeless, desolate pass that lies between the Boar of Badenoch and the Atholl Sow. As the train crosses the Drumochter summit I find myself casting off the last traces of my Englishry as a snake sloughs its skin.

A blinding snowstorm swept over the Forest of Rothiemurchus as I came through Aviemore obliterating completely my beloved Cairngorms, but revealing the stags on the hillsides. The branches of the firs in the woods of Moy were all bowed down with snow, and the bare branches of the twisted silver birches looked like silver filigree. As I crossed Culloden [1] Moor the evening sun lit up the white bull-back of Ben Wyvis

(pronounced Weevis) and the glistening waters of Moray Firth.

At Inverness I was once more in a world of green grass and gray houses. It is a more austere town than Edinburgh, more chary of unveiling its loveliness to the casual observer, but no less romantic in its atmosphere, no less lovable in character. Its gray bridges, its red-funneled fleet of trawlers drawn up like a platoon of soldiers, its almost rosily pink castle and deep-red station hotel (in which more interesting characters may be seen in a day than in most hotels in a year) combine to make Inverness quite unforgettable. It is close on six hundred miles from London, but it feels more like six thousand. To me it is always a terrific adventure to have reached it at all, and after penetrating the snowstorms and blizzards of Strath Spey I felt more than ever cut off from the south, and glad of it.

The following morning I set off past Tomnahurich,[2] "the hill of the fairies," along the road which runs along the west bank of Loch Ness, under an avenue of greening larches, birches and pines. The loch is twenty-four miles long and about a mile across, with high hills sloping steeply down on either side, and snow-capped mountains beyond its southern end. After about twelve miles I came to the first signs of the great road-widening scheme. The pink and gray rocks were being blasted with gelignite. There were huge drills at work boring into the face of the mountain. There were high cranes with maw-like buckets removing débris by the ton; felled trees lay half in, half out of the black water of the loch, and the road itself was a narrow, squelchy morass of mud with rails crossing and recrossing it. One

skid and the car would join the fallen trees in the loch below. Then across a small bay I caught sight of the pink tower and walls of Urquhart Castle jutting out into the loch.

I turned inland here past Drumnadrochit, up Glen Urquhart, a wooded pastoral country whose hillsides were dotted with white cottages. The mossy banks were yellow with primroses and daffodils. Then soon after passing Loch Meiklie I climbed over a craggy, treeless, open moor of nigger-brown heather, and overtook four gypsies bent almost double by the weight of the bundles on their backs. Their faces were as brown as the ling. Great snowstorms were swirling round all the high peaks as I went down into Strath Glass, a wide valley of grazing fields between craggy, tree-covered hills.

I crossed the strath and began the ascent of Glen Affric, the loveliest glen in all Scotland. The road climbs at once through woods carpeted with yellow moss and deep brown bracken, and overlooks the Badger Falls, a narrow, rocky gorge, down which the glittering, cairngorm-colored water roars in great cascades.

At the top of the gorge it widens out into Loch Beinn a' Mheadhoin over which I looked towards black hills, and white distant peaks of unknown mountains. Waterfalls came dashing down the sides of the hills, looking like long white hair blown by the wind. The loch narrowed and widened just as the woods did. For a mile or two I was in a thick forest of pines, then for miles in a thin belt, then for more miles on open moorland with only the purple, feathery branches of trees sticking up like candles on the gray rocks above, and

the whortleberry and heather growing among the lichen-covered bowlders at my side.

And so at last I came to Loch Affric, beyond which there is no road, but a rough track goes on into the distant mountains for twenty miles to Loch Duich and the Five Sisters of Kintail, as wild a walk as is to be found in these islands. As I came up to the Lodge the head stalker, Mr. Peter McLaren, came out to greet me, and showed me through his glass a herd of about fifty stags feeding on the slopes of Mam Sodhail, just below the snow-line. All the peaks here were snow-covered and the corries were wholly white. There was crust enough to delight the eye of the ski-runner on their gentler slopes. Before I reached this spot, most of the near hills looked like plum-puddings with a thin coating of sugar on them.

A badger-colored cairn puppy worrying a rabbit-skin attracted me. But the whites of his black eyes were showing. As soon as anybody came near he ran away. The stalker couldn't catch him, and had to send for his daughter, who after some trouble got him into her arms. I couldn't take the white mountain of Mam Sodhail home with me, but I took the next best thing, a perpetual memory of the mountain in the puppy that had been bred under its shadow. Mr. McLaren assured me that he would take kindly to the south, which is more than I should if I'd been born and bred on the shores of Loch Affric. "Brochair his name is," said the stalker, "but I doubt if you can say that. It means 'hunter.'" As my pronunciation didn't disgust him, "Brochair" he remains.[3] The stalker's prophecy was right. He approved of the railway carriage on the

way south. He approved of my Sussex garden and of the Downs. He has eaten most of my shoelaces and a good deal of my manuscript. He doesn't appear to be pining for his native hills half as much as I am.

There are three of these lovely glens shooting off to the west of Strath Glass, so after being shown about twenty snowy peaks in the dim distance and vainly trying to pronounce their names, and sympathizing with the damage done by eagles ("one eagle'll clear a whole corrie of every living thing"), I left Mr. McLaren to go off and feed his herd. Stags are fed, like hens, on maize.

As I was going down the glen towards Strath Glass I saw four large black birds, larger than crows and not so large as ravens. Their backs were light gray. Were they capercailzie? [4] On the banks of the river were a good many red-beaked oyster-catchers looking as plump as ducks. I have never seen them so far inland before. I went up Glen Cannich as far as Cozac Lodge on Loch Mullardoch, where I climbed Crag Feusag to see if I could find the famous white stag of Cozac. The heather was about as wet as it could be, and I found a great deal of blood-red sphagnum moss and stalked several deer which were almost prepared to eat out of my hand, but there was no sign of a white stag. I heard a strange cry which I thought was that of a young eagle, but after tumbling about in wet bog and climbing the gray rocks in search of it, all the reward I got was a view of another side of Mam Sodhail, so I came down again in order to explore the third and the wildest of all the glens, that of Farrar.

First I had to retrace my steps down Cannich, then

came miles of the gentle pastures of Strath Glass. I again passed the four gypsies whom I had met earlier in the day. At Struy Bridge I turned up westward for the last time. At the foot by Loch Bean Acharan Strath Farrar is wooded, but after Loch a' Mhuillidh it becomes rocky and wild, nothing but high, menacing gray crags rising up into the snow with stags everywhere, until I came to Loch Monar where the track ends in a boathouse. The only way to the end of this most remote of lochs, eight miles away, is by motorboat.

Mountains hemmed me in on every side. I seemed to have come to the end of everything, and the snow swirling about on one summit, thunder-black clouds covering one whole side of the sky, and sword-shafts of sunshine breaking through on snow-hills beyond the black, combined to make the scene as grand and as desolate as anything I have ever seen. It seemed difficult to believe that there was any way back to civilization. All the rocks here are torn and twisted, writhing as if they had looked on Medusa's Head. Strath Glass looked absurdly tame as I reëntered it at Erchless with its church and hamlet and red-faced children. But there was one last burst of wildness on the Beauly River where I looked across a steep gorge to Eilean Aigas, the island-home, among the trees, of Mr. Compton Mackenzie, that prince of companions, most charming of novelists, and most zealous of Scots Nationalists.

The next day Mr. Graham, the Inverness gunsmith, was very insistent that I should go to Gairloch and Loch Maree, but the pull of Prince Charlie was too much for

me. I wanted to tread where he had trod, so I went to see Mr. McKay, the bookseller.

"There was an old man who used to come in in my father's time. He knew a woman who had seen the Prince himself," [5] he said reverently, and added most irreverently, "A clergyman came in not so long ago and talked about the Pretender. The Pretender! That's not our name for him here."

This time I took the road along the east side of Loch Ness, General Wade's military road, to me a far more romantic track than Hannibal's way over the Alps.

It too runs along the very edge of Loch Ness, and from it I looked across at my road of the day before with the white wisps of the traction engines, and the gashes of the pink rock cut by the road-makers of today. Generations to come will doubtless regard this road with the sort of veneration that I regard Wade's.

At Inverfarigaig I turned inward up a wooded pass and then south again through Glen Liath.

At Foyers there is a tremendous waterfall. I walked down a zigzag path through a steep wood and suddenly looked across a mighty chasm to a brown water which looked as if it were being poured out of a giant's jug over a terrifying black pool hundreds of feet below. Tree trunks stripped bare in the pool looked like dogs' bones. The whole wood was wet with unending cascades of spray. The fall itself spread out like a gigantic fan of white feathers. I had no idea that there was such a fall in the British Isles. Wade's road follows the river Foyers as far as White Bridge, and then goes straight over a high, wild, desolate moor with volcanic crags

rising on every side. By the side of it is a small upland loch called Tarff, with an island on which seagulls were nesting. This is the only time in my life that I have seen gulls perched in the branches of trees.

Just below I came to Glendoe Lodge, from the lawns of which I got a view of the whole long stretch of Loch Ness on one side, and over the gray houses of Fort Augustus below to Loch Oich on the other, with the snowy mass of Ben Nevis in the far distance. Just beyond Fort Augustus there rises the track over the Corrieyarick that was once General Wade's road across the mountains. No other road in these islands rises over 2,500 feet above sea level. It was a stupendous piece of road-making.

There are two great walks in Scotland that everybody takes. One is over the Larig to Braemar, and the other is over the Corrieyarick to Laggan.

I lost my way soon after the start.

About a couple of miles up, there is a parting of ways, one going off to the right upward, and one straight on downwards. I dislike going down unnecessarily during a climb. While I was debating, two young Scots in bonnets and kilts, carrying large packs, overtook me. They too were puzzled. We decided to take the right-hand track, and at Knollbuck the woman of the house smilingly told us that we were wrong. Down we went to the burn and up the zigzag, stony track that coiled its way round the bare hills.

The view, as we reached about 1,200 feet, became tremendous but mainly of great storms sweeping over snowy peaks. After following for several miles the track that Prince Charlie and his army took on their

historic march to Derby, I had to let my two Scots go on. I was bound for Prince Charlie's haunts after Culloden, not before; the hiding-places of his adversity. I was sad to see my friends go, because I had been warned that the snow at the top of the pass was too deep to get through. "The Scottish Horse came over last year," said one of them. "It must have been a brave sight." No braver, I think, than the sight of those two stout hearts with their heavy packs sallying up into the blinding snow last Friday. And at night they were camping out. One of them tried his best to make me take his stick. He couldn't believe that I really preferred to climb without one.

When I got down to the valley again I went on past Loch Oich and turned up Glen Garry, where the lower slopes of the hills below the snow-line became navy blue. It is a color I have seen in pictures, but never before on the hills themselves. At Tomdoun I turned north of the Kyle of Lochalsh road to cross an open moor of increasing desolation. It led down to Glen Loyne and Loch Loyne, where there appeared to be no house or hut of any kind from one end to another, nothing but snow-peaks and lonely waters and a track going on and on.

I crossed the glen and climbed diagonally up the further craggy slopes round a shoulder of Creag Mhaim where I found myself among the blizzards. It was icily cold and I plunged knee-deep in bog in my efforts to reach what I thought was a hut-circle. After climbing 1,400 feet the road drops quickly to the even wilder country of Glen Shiel, up which runs another military

road. The whole glen was arched by a superb rainbow as I came down into it.

Here, at the junction of the roads in Strath Clunie, at the white Clunie Inn, is the place for your holiday if you want solitude and grandeur. It is over fifty miles from the nearest market-town. Here are endless climbs. The Five Sisters of Kintail lie just at the head of the glen, with Ben Attow behind. Or if you prefer lower tracks there is the walk over to Glen Affric. Whichever way you look the views are immense. And except for the stags I passed no living creature, other than (oddly enough) a very red-faced baby asleep in a pram by the road-side.

All the way along the wild loch of Clunie I kept on stupidly repeating to myself the word "wonderful." There comes a time when grandeur becomes absolute. I had reached that stage at Clunie. Detailed analysis became impossible.

And so I came at last into Glen Moriston where the seven clansmen hid the hunted Prince on whose head was set a price of £30,000, and implored him to cast in his lot with them forever. Such loyalty is not of every day.

Glen Moriston just goes on and on as if forever, gradually getting more wooded and more civilized until at Ceannacroc I actually passed a stalker and his two daughters, and miles afterwards, at Inverwick, came upon a church and a camp of gypsies. Further down still there are timber-yards and newly-planted forests and many steeply arched gray bridges over the burns. At Invermoriston there is a post-office and an hotel, and soon afterwards I was once more on the side of



GLEN MORISTON



A HIGHLAND PASS

Loch Ness with twenty-six miles to go to Inverness, along a road which at this moment is even more exciting than General Wade's.

If you are in any kind of doubt about the best country for your holiday settle it now. If you can possibly afford it go to the Northern Highlands. Fishing these lochs, climbing these peaks, sitting in the heather by the side of these burns you will find recreation and exhilaration of a kind which you will find nowhere else in these islands, nowhere else in Europe. You will never exhaust the wonder of these hills, nor, if you are wise, will you ever lose your awe of them.

The noblest prospect that you and I are ever likely to see in this world lies north across the Border, not south across the water.

Well—now's your chance.

Every one knows how rich the Border Country is in ballads, but the ballads of the Northern Highlands are no less haunting. Since my early childhood I have loved the ballad of "Leezie Lindsay" more than any other of its kind and still find myself singing it on high hills when I am alone. So here it is. I hope you don't mind.

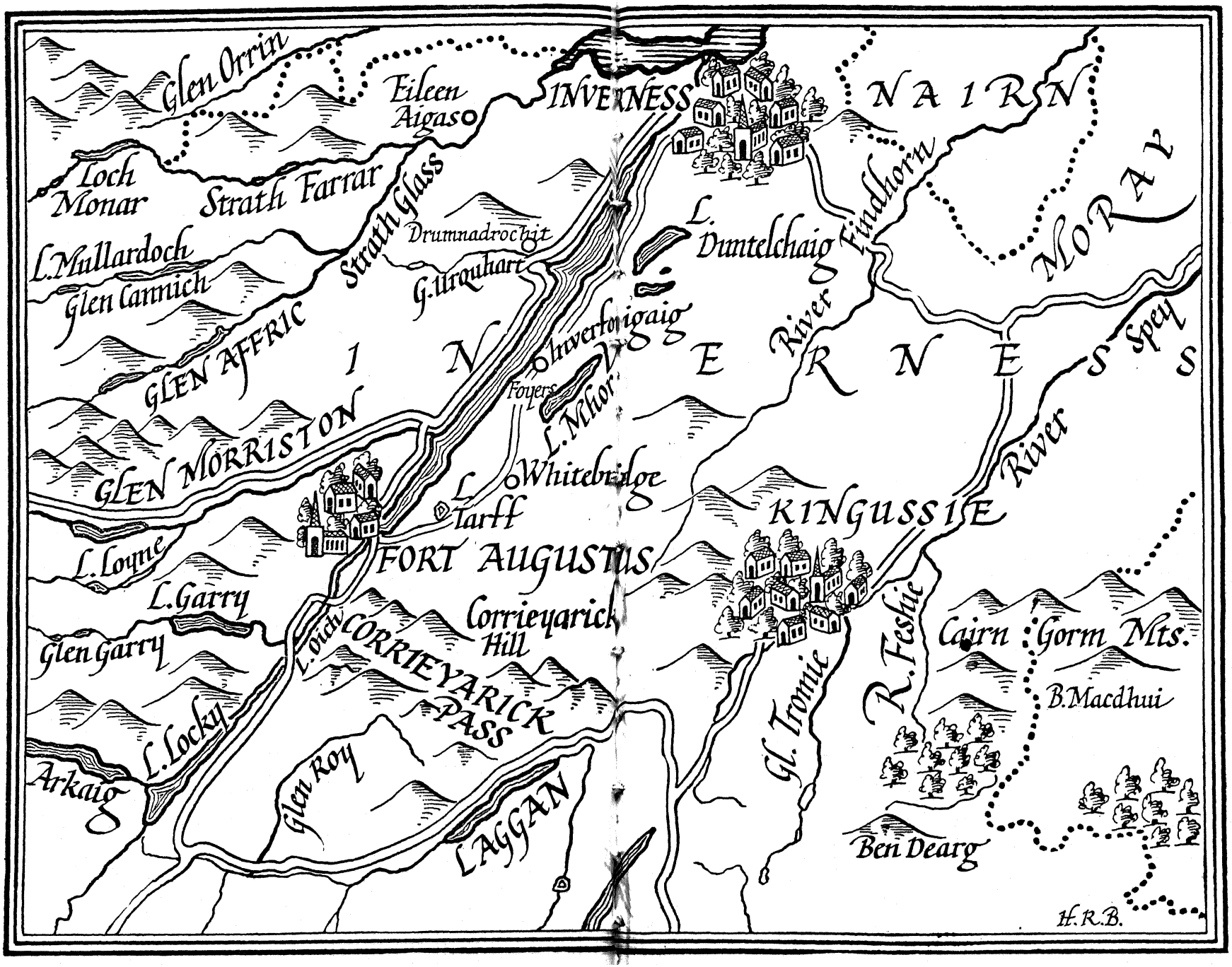
LEEZIE LINDSAY

"Will ye gang to the Hielands, Leezie Lindsay?
Will yet gang to the Hielands wi' me?
Will ye gang to the Hielands, Leezie Lindsay,
My bride and my darling to be?"

"To gang to the Hielands wi' you, Sir?
I dinna ken how that may be,
For I ken na the land that ye live in,
Nor ken I the lad I'm gaun' wi'."

"Leezie, lassie, 'tis little that ye ken,
If sae be ye dinna ken me,
For my name is Lord Ronald Macdonald,
A chieftain o' high degree."

She has kilted her coats o' green satin,
She has kilted them up to the knee,
And she's aff wi' Lord Ronald Macdonald,
His bride and his darling to be.


Glen Orrin
Eileen Aigas
INVERNESS
NAIRN
Loch Monar
Strath Farrar
Strath Glass
Drumnadrochit
L. Duntelchaig
Findhorn
MORAY
L. Mullardoch
Glen Cannich
G. Urquhart
GLEN AFFRIC
INVERNESS
River Ness
River Spey
Glenmoriston
Foyers
L. Mhor
GLEN MORRISTON
L. Whitebridge
Tarff
KINGUSSIE
River Spey
L. Loyne
FORT AUGUSTUS
L. Garry
Corrieyarick Hill
Glen Garry
L. Oich
CORRIEYARICK PASS
R. Feshie
Cairn Gorm Mts.
Gl. Tromie
B. Macdhui
L. Lochy
Glen Roy
Arkaig
LAGGAN
Ben Dearg
H.R.B.

17. NORTH RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

I *MYSELF* had not realized until recently that this Minster is one of the four largest churches in Northern Europe, and for majestic simplicity probably unrivaled in the world. But there are a great number of other things about this ancient City of York I had hitherto failed to realize. Every one knows the curve of York station, and a very imposing station it is—it seems to have through trains to every corner of the island—but from the train nothing of old York is visible except the Minster towers. I had not meant to make York my center for the North Riding, but as soon as I saw that golden mass of dancing daffodils on the green bank outside and below the glittering white city walls I knew that I had no alternative.

I climbed these crenelated walls and almost at once had to come down again to cross the Ouse. Then as I came in sight of the lofty west front of the Minster I forgot everything else. It was too late in the day to go inside in spite of the abrupt notice: "Entrance—Push," so I just stood and gaped at the perfect symmetry and unity of this twin-towered face. Balance and regularity are not always, architecturally, pleasing. In the West Front of York you see as good a defense of uniformity in stone as in the exterior of Salisbury.

I rejoined the wall at Bootham Bar, a turreted gateway of the medieval city, its entrance from the north. Armed men used to be stationed here to watch and conduct travelers through the forest of Galtres [1] and protect them against wolves. There was a man stationed here as I reclimbed the wall, but to the best of my belief he was unarmed. He was a tall, brown-eyed, bronzed policeman with a waxed mustache.

"Yon's Roman, yon," he said, pointing to some place invisible to me below and under the wall. I craned my neck, and discovered that falling off the wall on the inside of the city is as easy as scaling it from the outside must have been difficult.

"Archæologists from all ower t'world coom to 'ave a luke at yon," he went on excitedly.

I rubbed the soft stone. It came off in my hand.

"Yon's magnesium limestone," said the policeman. "All t'way from Tadcaster. Watter washes t'dirt off on it, but it's lasted sin' Roman times. They knew a thing or two about building, did t'Romans."

He leaned over the parapet and pointed over the outer side of the wall to a long street of red-brick courtyards and rows of houses. His eyes lit up.

"Eh! There used to be soom grand goin's-on over yon on Satt'day neights," he said, "when beer were strong an' toopence a pint. Rare lot o' poachers op yonder before t'dole came to save th'hens."

Some small urchins in the far distance fled unobtrusively along the walls. The policeman chuckled.

"Yoong moonkeys. You should joost see their 'eads popping ower t'top o' t'parapet at neight. I 'as to keep 'em off in t' day-time."

We came slowly—he took his wall-walk as a connoisseur sips his wine, lingeringly—to the end of another section of the wall, and my guide pointed vaguely into the distance. I could only see hoardings and gasworks.

"Impossible swamp, yon," he said, rather grandly, I thought. "No need fur t'walls where t'impossible swamp war. Cromwell found that out reight enoof."

We crossed the "impossible swamp," passed the medieval Red Tower, a number of stanch bastions, postern gates, and over more bars or gate-houses until we came to a gate where he told me that the heads of Yorkists, Jacobites and all the luckless conquered were hung out on poles. But in spite of his scholarship he had an eye on a more recent past. He eyed some bedraggled houses ruefully.

"Yon's Irish quarter. Rafftatertys an' sooch like. Cattle-drovers. A rare lot o' feighters wance, but t'beer changed all yon. I mind th' time when . . ."

He recounted with gusto the blood-thirsty deeds of past "Rafftatertys." He caught me glancing up at a sign.

"Aye," he nodded, "we 'as our Piccadilly, too, and Regent Street. Quite residential."

A bell struck somewhere. Bells are always striking in York. I thought it was curfew. But no.

"Quarter to," said the policeman, "I mun be thinkin' about lockin' oop for t' neight."

"Locking up?" I repeated.

"Aye," he said, "we should 'ave t' robbers throwin' their stoof ower t' walls else. I'm t' Keeper o' t' walls."

Keeper of the Walls of York! What a grand job.

I wandered on, leaving him to lock up behind me. The circuit of the walls is about three miles, and there are 360 steps to go up and down. No wonder he takes his time. From this angle or high circumference I got an impression of a red-roofed city of Many Churches—there are still more than twenty, and in the middle ages there were forty-one—of many red-brick mills and warehouses to let, of the Dean's garden full of apple-blossom,[2] and of untidy green banks crowded with happy children already kindling fires and erecting tents out of old bits of sacking preparatory to their nightly onslaught on the walls after the gates were locked.

As I sat in the huge garden of the Station Hotel in the evening light and watched the Minster towers change imperceptibly from rosiest pink to a gray wraith that merged gradually into the very gray of dusk itself, I knew that it was no good my making my headquarters anywhere else. I should just have to come back every night.

So in the morning I quickly turned my back on the city and took a bus across the green vale of York through the long, wide streets of red-roofed, sunny Sutton-on-the-Forest where Laurence Sterne wrote "Tristram Shandy" [3] and preached for thirty years, past Huby with its tall, gayly-painted maypole, past the gray school of Ampleforth perched on a hillside close to a village that is simply a Cotswold village transplanted to the north, and so eventually I arrived at the foot of the Hambleton Hills at Helmsley. Here I saw a ruined gray castle, once the home of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, standing in Duncombe Park,

until recently the seat of Lord Feversham, but now a girls' school.

Helmsley consists mainly of a large market square with a most attractive ancient, gray stone inn, the "Black Swan" (a Trust House, and, like all Trust Houses, trustworthy). I don't wonder that the sight of this inn made Dorothy Wordsworth's heart dance. I took a car from here over Scawton Moor, a stone-wall country of dark ling full of red deer and tumuli, to Sutton Bank, a place exactly like Leith Hill, on the very edge of the Hambleton Hills, looking steeply down a thousand feet over a green plain to the distant Pennines. The wide green track of the Roman Road from Yarm to York, resembling the Ickneild Way, runs by here.

My path lay through Cold Kirby, an unprotected, gray Peak District sort of village, with the bodies of six or seven moles hanging from the top bar of every gate in the parish, treeless except for a high holly sticking here and there out of the walls and a few stunted thorns in the fields, down to Ryedale, where I saw for the first time in my life the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey, its lofty lime-stone arches rising from a bed of smooth green in the very heart of the dale. On every side green tree-fringed banks rise steeply for three or four hundred feet, and on the east side there is a wide terrace with an Ionic and a Tuscan temple.

The Abbey itself seems a very magnet to the sun, which was pouring into its roofless aisle through tier upon tier of exquisitely curved arches. Pheasants were cocking in the hillside, rooks chattering in the trees, and every singing bird sweetening the sun-kissed air

with its morning anthem. The woods were full of anemones, and the banks yellow with primroses. Nowhere else have I felt quite so sure that the medieval builders loved the natural curves of hill and dale as they loved molding the stone to their heart's desire.

A few miles north of Rievaulx, at the junction of the Rye and the Seph (streams, not rivers) are two fine, isolated lumps of moors, just above the village of Haunby, of no great height, but of good omen to the walker, serving as they do as two august portals to the open moor, which keeps about a thousand feet above sea level.

The road then runs alongside the Seph through Bilsdale, a cultivated happy valley of fields and farms and woods, with an unpretentious Friends' Meeting-House and an astonishing long, low, thatched building, once the "Sun" Inn. Having inspected the turf fire which never goes out, I climbed up a rickety ladder to a partitioned attic under the thatch, and was shown the bed built into the wall where dukes and earls in the olden days stayed for the grouse-shooting—the best bedroom this, because it had an iron-barred window about a foot square—there was another room with no window, where the too generous drinkers slept off the effect of their orgies, "sometimes for a week," said the landlord. It reminded me of Bobbie Burns and the "Tam o' Shanter" Inn at Ayr.

I saw gray jet dumps on the sides of the brown moors as I climbed through Chop Yat, and soon afterwards came to the end of the Feversham estate and looked round over the many noses and steep edges of the Cleveland Hills, to the monument to Captain Cook, and the

queer isolated, thousand-foot knoll that is Roseberry Topping, one side of which is eaten away by the ironstone mines. The water here ran through orange-colored beds, and the hillsides were scarred with orange streaks.

Soon after Guisborough I turned south again out of the mining area, over Danby Low Moor to Castleton. This eastern side of the hill country is much wilder than the west, and as I climbed out of Westerdale to Ralph's Crosses, where the country becomes one magnificent desolation of black, houseless upland, I felt as if I were back on Dartmoor, not only because of the many ancient crosses and standing stones (which are strangely defaced by the initials of the thoughtless) but because of the miles and miles of wild moorland of black peat bogs. It is unlike Dartmoor in its absence of tors, in the presence of grouse butts, and in its gentle, green dales.

This great expanse of moor is like a hand with an infinite number of long, slender finger-like ridges tapering to the south. I followed one of these ridges, Blakey Rigg, with green Rosedale far below on my left and green Farndale far below on my right—toy dales after Swaledale, but lovely for all that—down an open, winding road that descended very gently, and ultimately ended in a red-roofed village, Hutton-le-Hole, where I would advise you to stay, if you like, as I do, villages that abut on the actual moor-edge.

I turned aside to see the crypt at Lastingham, another of these moor-edge villages, and then returned to Helmsley by way of tiny Kirkdale,[4] a gem of a hamlet among trees in a tiny glen, famous for the discovery (of prehistoric remains in its cave) that led to the founda-

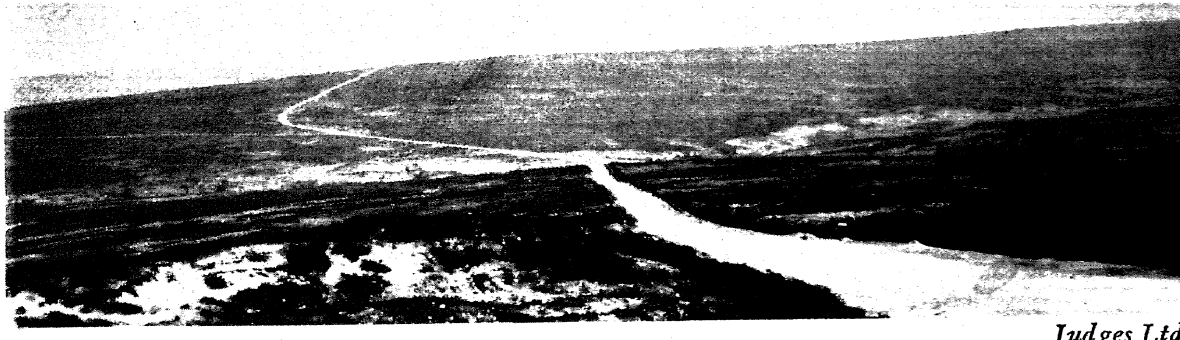
tion of the British Association, and for the inscription on its sun-dial which is the longest piece of Anglo-Saxon carved writing in existence. The writing is as legible as when it was carved nine hundred years ago.

The next day I went by train to Whitby, and discovered that Pickering (where, by the way, you may see the House that Jack Built) is, like Helmsley, a gateway to the moors.

I know no other bit of railway-line in England to compare with that between Pickering and Goathland. It is a Scots glen in miniature, and as the mists were swirling over the tops of the lime-stone crags above, it didn't seem so very miniature. This is Newton Dale, and its brown, winding streams, wet bracken-covered ravines, fresh green larch woods, dark acres of ling and bilberry bushes and stern rocks, combine to form one of Yorkshire's loveliest sights.

It is a fitting introduction to Whitby, where the first sight that meets the eye is the glorious arch of the ruined Abbey set high on the naked foreland 250 feet above the sea, a flaunting, if ragged, banner of Christianity defying the pagan pirate, so different from peaceful hidden Rievaulx. It seems most odd that it should have been here that the Roman usage was chosen above the Celtic, and that the date of Easter was fixed.

I crossed the pincer-shaped harbor by the Green Bridge, and after resisting many invitations to buy a brooch of jet, and succumbing to the lure of a polished, petrified fossil ammonite for St. Hilda's sake, I passed through a fishermen's colony—all yards and nets and balconies and steep, narrow, cobbled ways exactly like St. Ives, and climbed the 199 broad stone steps to the



MOORLAND ROAD, NR. WHITBY

Judges Ltd.



SUN INN, BILSDALE

cross that commemorates our earliest Saxon poet, Caedmon, the cowherd, and so arrived at the smooth lawns of the lofty-arched Abbey. How efficiently and quietly the Office of Works has done its job of keeping these ancient places beautiful. The stones of this unprotected, gaunt pile have been beaten by the wind and rain into curves that look just like runic inscriptions, but the fragment that remains is a magnificent testament to the builders' faith.

Exactly as I passed out of the lovely chancel I saw my first swallow of the year dip over the water of the Abbey fishpond, settle for a second on a wooden post, and give its quick, nervous greeting to the home it had come so far to nest in.

How odd and inconsequent are the things that remain. In the church close by, the only Saxon relic is the stone coffin of what surely must have been the smallest baby that ever was born; on the beach lie the tiny snakes that St. Hilda petrified. No longer do the whalers land at the gray staiths of Whitby; no longer does Whitby jet bedeck an English Queen. Rome dies, but the swallow still lives. And the things that I remember most clearly about Whitby are the astonishing sight of two jackdaws in a nest, built right on the top of a weather-vane on a church, and the grave of Francis and Mary Huntrood who were born on the same day of the same month of the same year, September 19th, 1600, and after marrying and having twelve children they both died on the same day of the same month of the same year, on their eightieth birthday. How odd and inconsequent are the things that remain.

After leaving the Abbey I walked nine miles over

the cliffs to Robin Hood's Bay. There was nothing to see because I was most of the time enveloped in a white mist. There was only one thing to hear, and that was the fog-siren, which was more helpful to the shadowy outlines of the steamers that passed below than to me.

All I can tell you is that many white gulls loomed out of strange ledges in the black rocks. The beach, two or three hundred feet below, seemed to be composed of shining black slabs. In nine miles I seemed to have climbed nine hundred stiles, shaped like squat ladders leaning towards each other with smooth wooden barrow handles. Everywhere the cliff appeared to be on the point of crumbling away, and in one of the hundred and one gorse-covered ravines that I crossed I saw my first king-cups of the year.

Robin Hood's Bay [5] is just Clovelly all over again, a higgledy-piggledy village of houses built round one appallingly steep street which no vehicles can descend. The road ends in a slipway and a couple of round, stone bastions which give on to wide, firm sands. A decided change for Robin Hood after Sherwood Forest.

I gave up my last day to York. In the Minster I was assured by Mr. Strickland, most concise of vergers, that the vast east window, the precious glass of which cost only £55 to put in in the fifteenth century, occupied as much space as a tennis court, and he also showed me the two-thousand-year-old Assyrian hunting horn, presented to the Minster by Ulphus, the Dane, a thousand years ago. How odd are the things that remain.

The green and the blue and the red of the medieval glass in this Minster excel in richness any other glass that I know, and the greeny-gray background of the

tall, slender Five Sisters window, the patterns of which are so quietly interwoven that for some time you do not see them at all, remains with me as one of the absolutely perfect things of my life. Lofty, light, spacious, stately and simple, is the great Minster of York.

I passed from the leaning-to, gabled Shambles, to Whip-ma-Whap-ma-gate where felons were whipped, into Trinity, the oldest church in York—where the ancient caretaker kept on saying to me: "What, loove?" —to All Saints, where a most painstaking woman showed me a fourteenth-century stained-glass window depicting the last fifteen days of the world as described by Richard of Hampole in the "Pricke of Conscience," [6] a very realistic conception; and to All Souls, in the lantern-tower of which used to hang the lamp to guide the wayfarer through the forest of Galtres.[7]

I passed straight from the very oldest to the very newest, from the Museum—where the Curator showed me Roman altars, an amazing collection of Roman statuary, and the chestnut hair of a Roman girl—to the huge, red-brick factory of Rowntree, where I saw the chestnut-haired, small, singing girls of modern York covering chocolates with gilt foil, and packing them into boxes with fingers so nimble and accurate as to make all the machinery look awkward and unnecessary.

The path of a chocolate from cocoa-bean to our lips is like the life of man, full of rude moldings and inexplicably complicated journeyings, but it has lovely compensation in the brief moments that it passes through the fingers of the smiling girls of York, and that probably is the secret of its peculiar sweetness.

It seemed to me good to finish my journeyings in

York, not because two great Cæsars of Imperial Rome were invested with the purple here, nor because Dick Turpin went to the gallows here, but because I started in this county, and it seemed only fitting that here the wheel should come full circle.

Yorkshire is by far our largest, and easily our most varied county. And its manifold beauties are far too little known. And what matters most to me, its people are most lovable.

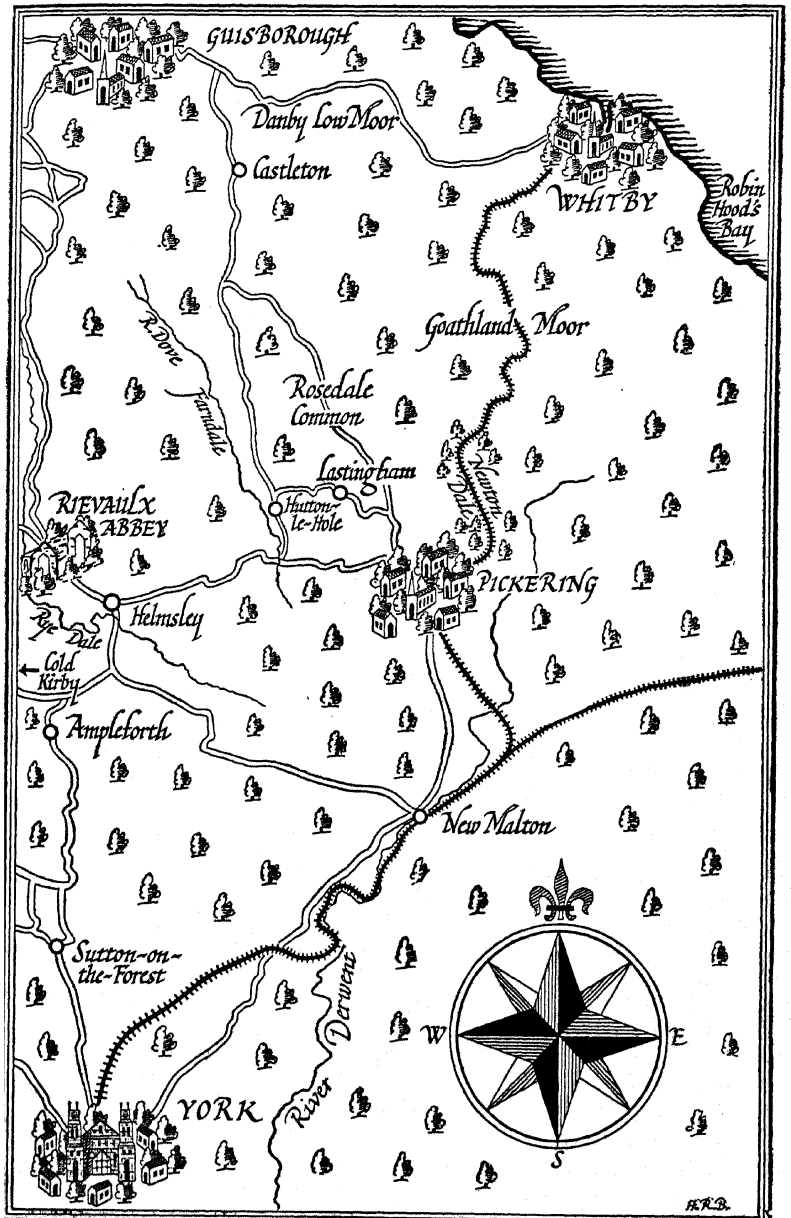
Since I arrived at Haworth in the West Riding last New Year's Eve I have covered fifteen thousand miles in this island. I have purposely avoided the rich loveliness of Devon, the glories of the Lakes, and the well-known South, but apart from these I cannot too much insist that my journey was purely haphazard—I just jumped about from one place I'd somehow missed to another place that I knew too little. No place was suggested to me by the B.B.C. I just obeyed an instinct. Each week was a gamble—and I don't mind confessing now that I dreaded lest any place should let me down. Let me assure you that no place should let me down. If it has seemed dull to you the dullness lies entirely with me. I have underrated the charms of every place that I have been to, partly because I lack the words to explain loveliness, and partly because I have been handicapped by time; time to see and time in which to tell you what I have seen. The simple truth is that you can't go wrong in Britain.

My part is now over. I only wish that I were coming with you, for you'll see more than I ever saw, and enjoy richer colors, longer days, warmer weather.

It's all so much better than I've made it out to be,

that I can see already the letters of complaint. "Why on earth didn't you tell us about this?" "How could you have missed that?" Well, let me have your letters of complaint or otherwise. I shall be glad to know how you get along, and if I can be of any help in telling you where to go, don't hesitate to write and ask me about this and that. What's the good of my having covered fifteen thousand miles so recently if you're not to profit from my running about? Let us make seeing Britain the fashion in future.

Over the doorway of the Merchant Adventurers' Hall in York are inscribed these words: "*Dieu nous donne bonne aventure.*" Nothing could more exactly state what I wish you. God give *you* good adventure.


GUISBOROUGH
Danby Low Moor
Castleton
WHITBY
Robin Hood's Bay
R. Dove
Farndale
Goathland Moor
Rosedale Common
Lastingham
Newton Dale
Hutton-le-Hole
RIEVAULX ABBEY
PICKERING
Helmsley
Rye Dale
Cold Kirby
Ampleforth
New Malton
Sutton-on-the-Forest
Derwent
River
YORK
W
E
S
H.F.B.

1. I was taken to task for using a south-country word which the Oxford Dictionary gives as a synonym for *cow-house* instead of the north-country word *mistal* which the Oxford Dictionary does not recognize at all.

It was delightful to have this correction from the first schoolmaster I ever came under, Mr. W. B. Crump, of Heath Grammar School, Halifax. He was also the kindest.

2. *Rimington* is the name of a tune published in 1904 by Mr. Francis Duckworth, for fifty years organist of Albert Road Wesleyan Chapel, Colne, to accompany the hymn "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun" and sung all over the world.

It is called Rimington from the Lancashire village of that name which lies at the north foot of Pendle Hill, where Mr. Duckworth was born.

There are over two million copies of the tune in circulation and many listeners kindly sent me the music printed on a postcard.

3. Mr. Hollingsworth, of Leeds, tells me that as the last owner of Wycollar Hall lay dying he commanded that a main should be fought in his bedroom by two of the best cocks that could be found, and then ordered his favorite hunter and pack of hounds to be also brought to his bedroom in order that he could say good-by to them.

Another correspondent, Miss Harper, of Dukinfeld, claims

the story of the fighting-cocks for her own ancestors of Emmott Hall.

4. This talk, judging from the letters received, appealed mainly to Brontë lovers and north country people. It also brought appreciations from Edward FitzGerald's great-niece, and Florence Barclay's daughter. That "Wuthering Heights" should be a link between "Omar" and "The Rosary" is a little odd.

It was less surprising that I should get letters from descendants of the Brontës and from Mrs. Edgerley, the Hon. Secretary of the Brontë Society, who reminded me of a visit made to Haworth last year by Max Beerbohm and Mrs. Thomas Hardy, in the course of which Max Beerbohm decided that Branwell was a good artist and "might with training have been a great one." He reminded Beerbohm of Blake.

Mrs. Ethel Shepherd, of Cayton Bay, tells me that she was taken at one year old, fatherless, and brought up by her grandmother Earnshaw, whose husband used to clean and adjust Patrick Brontë's pistols.

"At the house where I was brought up and which is still there, the watch-making went on, also a drapery and hardware store—the village paraffin was sold, all hats and bonnets were made there, and all dresses and coats, umbrellas were mended there and re-covered, felt hats were re-blocked and feathers were cured and stored in large sulphur 'stove-boxes.' The village dentistry was done there and amateur plumbing. Cotton and sheeting generally was grass-bleached there. It was the chief calling-place of the Keighley carrier."

Mrs. Georgina Becker, of Beccles, writes that her mother was for a short time at the "Brontë's School," whatever that may mean, and that her experience there saved her six daughters from boarding-schools.

Mr. Arthur Hill, of Thornton, reminds me that the Brontë

children were born in a small house that is now a butcher's shop, in Market Street. Thornton, which was once an upland village on a steep hillside like Haworth, is now a suburb of Bradford.

A school friend of whom I had heard nothing for thirty years wrote to remind me that his great-aunt was the Miss Wooler who first taught Charlotte Brontë and then hired her as companion-help.

All this was in marked contrast to the complete silence that followed my talk on my pilgrimage of the land of Burns. No one wrote either to praise or condemn what I said about him.

On this page is the "Wassail Song" sent to me by a Yorkshire correspondent, as typical of the sort of thing the Mummers sing on New Year's Eve.

THE WASSAIL SONG

Here we come a' wassailing, Amongst the leaves so green,
And here we come a wandering, So fair to be seen.
Love and joy come to you, And to you your wassail too,
And God send you a Happy New Year.

We are not daily beggars, That beg from door to door,
But we are neighbor's children, That you have seen before.
Love and joy, etc.

We have a little purse, Made of stretching leather skin,
And we want a little of your money, To line it well within.
Love and joy, etc.

Good master and good mistress, As you sit round the fire,
Pray think of us poor children, A wandering in the mire.
Love and joy, etc.

Call up the butler of this house, Put on his golden ring,
And give us each a glass of beer, And better we shall sing!
Love and joy, etc.

God bless the master of this house, Likewise the mistress too,
And all the little children, That round the table go.
Love and joy come to you, And to you your wassail too,
And God send you a Happy New Year.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 2

1. According to Cobham Brewer, Avalon means apple island and is generally supposed to indicate Glastonbury, a name derived, according to him, from the Saxon "glaston" (green like glass). Whether you spell it Avalon or Avilion depends on individual taste. There is a fox-trot entitled "Avalon," and Tennyson preferred Avilion for the sake of prosody.

2. Miss Pedder, of Falmouth, writes:—
"As I know Wells very well may I venture to make a little correction as to the famous clock? It isn't *mice* that run round and are decapitated, but four *Knights.*"
This shows how easily the microphone may distort an innocent sounding word like *Knights.*

3. Mr. H. A. Turner, of Bexley, tells me that there is an ancient cup at Nant Eos, near Aberystwyth, which the owners claim to be the Holy Grail.

4. Reen ought to be spelt *rhine,* but as this was a talk I elected to spell it as it was pronounced. The Rev. C. H. Griffith, of St. Leonard's-on-Sea, was surprised that I did not mention the gypsy's warning to Monmouth "Beware of the Rhene," which he naturally took to be the Rhine, which was in those days spelt and pronounced Rhene, as you can see in "Paradise Lost."

5. The famous Alfred Jewel, now in the Ashmolean Museum, was found not at Athelney, as you might expect, but at North Newton. It is a jewel set in gold, bearing the inscription: "Aelfred mee heht gewyrcan" (Alfred had me made). It was discovered in 1693. No one knows anything of either its nature or use.

6. Charles Brennan. There was a Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and a famous juggler called Brandon in Henry VIII's reign, but who was Brennan?

7. The inhabitants of Penrith claim that the skirmish of Clifton during Prince Charlie's retreat from Derby in 1745-6 was the last battle fought on English soil.

8. Mr. Alfred Watkins, author of "The Old Straight Track," reminds me that churches on high natural points are always dedicated to St. Michael, and gives as instances St. Michael's Mount, Mont St. Michel, Brent Tor, and the Skerrid, Abergavenny.

9. A correspondent from High Ham assures me that the inhabitants still believe in witchcraft, the evil eye and hag-riding, and that there is a wise woman in Dorset who lifts curses for five guineas.

Another correspondent tells me that at Pilton, near Glastonbury, there is a strong legend that Joseph of Arimathea brought our Lord there as a child, and that the landing-stage where they disembarked can still be seen. There is, too, a fairy-ring in the Rectory Garden from which Arthur and his Knights have often been seen riding by.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 3

1. Mr. F. W. Barraclough, of London, writes:—

"Is it quite fair to tell England, and beyond, that the church was locked? Was it necessary? It would have surprised

me if it were open all day, and it is likely that in your own experience you may have learned the tip of plying, with a few discreet questions, the inmate of the first cottage you see when descending on an unknown village on a church-hunting expedition. There are, not infrequently, good reasons for a closed church, but no one seeks to defend clerical (or lay) sloth when saying this. The position of village and church in this instance has some element of defence.

"Listeners would gather a rather false impression of the Dymoke descent, described as so much Marmion followed by so much Dymoke, with the implied fairy-tale ending. Canon Lodge's 'Scrivelsby' with its appendix containing the pedigree, scarcely bears out this view. Time taken up by a brief reference to the descent through female lines, the failure of the line and the romantic succession of the present owner would have been more interesting to strangers, and to Lincolnshire listeners, too, than the silly chatter about 'Mr. Dymoke's pheasant-shooting.' What, pray, is a pheasant-shoot that one may walk through it! A watershoot we know; but the other is bewildering. It seems to infer that if one walks through the Hallifirs, or Dunhelme 'goss,' one is walking through a fox-hunt!"

2. Mr. J. P. Williams-Freeman, of Botley, writes:—

"I understood you to say that the Dymoke whose tomb you noted at Scrivelsby was a knight and a Baronet.

"There has never been a Baronetcy in the Dymoke family. The order was only instituted by James I.

"Probably the title you read was Knight Banneret, a very much greater honour, only conferred by the Sovereign on the field of battle for some deed of special valour and with great ceremony before the whole army. The honour was conferred on knights usually, but not invariably. Dymoke was sure to have been a knight already."

3. Mr. Picton, of Kenton, reminds me that Someries Place or Castle near Luton, built by Lord Wenlock in 1472, is also of red brick. So is Caister, built in 1443.

4. "Boston Parish Church has seven doors representing the days of the week. Twelve pillars in the nave represent the months of the year; twenty-four steps to the library denote the hours of the day; fifty-two windows the weeks in the year; sixty steps to the chancel roof, the seconds in the minute; and 365 steps to the 275 foot high 'Stump' (the tower) the days in the year."—R. B.

5. "Not so, Mr. Mais. The Pilgrim Fathers had nothing to do with the founding of 'that other Boston.' That distinction belongs wholly to the Puritans of John Winthrop's band who left England in 1630. It is too often forgotten that the Puritans were of the Church of England, whereas the Pilgrim Fathers were Nonconformists. It was because many of the Puritans had connections with the Lincolnshire Boston that the name was chosen for the town on Massachusetts Bay. Mr. Mais was wrong, too, in his sweeping generalisation as to the houses in the Fens being 'all of red brick.' If he had visited the Deeping Fens he would have seen countless houses of the grey stone he so much admires."—H. C. S. in the *Listener.*

6. Mr. F. W. Barraclough continues to write:—

"Quite candidly—do you believe it? Ask yourself how many grooms have you seen during the last twenty years with the old-time straw? You may have seen three or four. Cigarettes? Rather! Having tested the statement in two quarters, the following results were obtained. At a large livery-stable I approached some grooms and while we were in conversation the master approached. The grooms said they never saw them and had not done so for years, adding: 'the master comes from Lincolnshire so he can tell you.' That in itself was a coincidence, but he, too, pooh-poohed the idea,

adding that he did not believe it of Lincolnshire, 'Least of all, Boston.' Monday last was sale day at Tattersalls, so I went down to Albert Gate straw-hunting. It was, indeed, a blank day. The grooms I talked to thought it a rather good joke. Not a straw to be seen in any mouth of a groom!"

7. "And so we have there a claim by an authority that the Lincolnshire dialect represents the best of spoken English. It is a claim not without historic foundation, for it was a Bourne man, Robert Manning, who, in the fourteenth century, when the common speech of England was being reduced to writing for the first time—until then nearly all documents were in Latin and Norman French—gave English a standardised literary form."—*Lincoln Echo.*

8. A local newspaper comments:—

"Quadring. The pronunciation of local names is difficult for strangers, so we must excuse Quadring for Kwaydring."

This pronunciation business is perplexing. How do you pronounce Claughton? I know a family who pronounce it Clawton, and of two places close to one another in Lancashire, one of which is Clyton and the other Clafton. And what of Clavelshay which, Mr. Barraclough tells me, is pronounced Classey? And how is Classey pronounced?

9. There is, of course, that charming film actress, Helen Twelvetrees.

10. Mr. Barraclough goes on writing:—

"My last visit to Spalding was a special journey to see Canon Richard Bullock, but I have not the pleasure of knowing the present vicar as I knew Canon Bullock, so I wrote to him, asking him if sheep grazed in the churchyard, as Mr. Mais told us. No reply is forthcoming so far. A native of Spalding tells me that in his boyhood, anything from forty to fifty years ago, they did, but that the practice was discontinued and he is doubtful as to its revival."

11. Ascoughfee is pronounced As-coff-fee.

The *Nottingham Guardian* writes:—

"The building was erected a little more than five hundred years ago, in 1429, but its fifteenth-century characteristics have suffered sadly at the hands of architects and builders who have adapted it for various uses from time to time. It is now used as a museum, and the grounds form a public garden. The hall is associated with the beginnings of that distinguished body, the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, which numbered among its members Newton, Stukeley, Pope, Gray and Addison. The Society was founded in 1710 by Maurice Johnson, who resided at Ayscoughfee Hall, which is close to the church. The present members of the Society will hardly be content to see the Hall decay before their eyes."

12. Cowbit is pronounced *Cubbit.*

13. Mr. G. P. Strickland, of Crowland, writes:—

"The visitor who finds his way to the Abbey is puzzled by the spelling of the name as seen in and around the Abbey and the form adopted upon the sign-posts and by the civil authority. It would appear from the MSS. in the British Museum, the Abbey Registers and the deed of Institution of the Rectors, that there is a consistent train of evidence for spelling the name as 'Croyland.' It is only in comparatively recent times that the spelling has been altered to 'Crowland.' For the adoption of the latter spelling the post-office and the civil authority are in the main responsible; such authorities cannot be expected to have any sentiment over such an apparently trivial matter. 'Croyland' means 'Cruland,' or soft and muddy land. Abbot Thurketyl in A.D. 975 speaks of 'courteous Croyland.' The spelling 'Crowland' bears no reference to the crows who annually nest in the Abbey precincts; it appears only after the Dissolution."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 4

1. Mr. K. D. Waite, of Lee-on-Solent, writes:—

"They say on the moors that the spirit of the moor-people goes into the grouse when they die. If this is so, I can well imagine that my father's spirit was one of those which told you to 'Go Back.' His moors were on the north side of Edale valley for over thirty years, and with him I have toiled day after day among the bogs and cloughs until I knew every fold of the ground. With others he was responsible for some of those notice-boards which offended you, but in those days England was not so much the poor man's heritage that it is to-day, but rather the rich man's playground. Incidentally, one of the reasons for those boards was that people from Sheffield would persist in walking away from the paths and getting lost in the winter time. You know what a frightening experience it is to be enveloped suddenly in cloud and to have to stay still for hours till it lifts. I have waited ten hours waiting for that in the dark as a small boy, and that after seeing not so long before the body of a man carried down from the hills on a gate. He didn't wait for the cloud to rise and stepped into oblivion over the edge of Golden Clough."

2. Mr. J. B. Firth puts the population at twice this amount.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 5

1. "The report of Mr. S. P. B. Mais' talk on the Roman Wall needs some correction. The vallum is not a ditch only, but a system of earthworks, of interest second only to the Wall itself; and its ditch differs in both design and purpose from the Wall ditch. The round stone column by the roadside near Vindolanda is a mile-stone, not an altar—probably (to judge by the reference to its position) the stump which has

recently been restored to its present site. The other, in the dip below the camp, should not be missed. Mr. Mais spoke truer than he knew when he said, 'It is not only possible, but easy, to visit the Roman Wall, and to miss it altogether.'

"To any who may be contemplating a visit to the Wall, I would say that the irreducible minimum is the stretch from Sewingshields to Whinshields. But better is to strike the line north of Corbridge, and not leave it (except to find a bed) till you reach the neighbourhood of Lanercost—some thirty miles as the crow flies, but perceptibly more as the Wall winds. Note the direction—from East to West: never mind if the wind *is* in your face."—H. Lang Jones in the *Listener*.

2. Mr. J. Bertram Davidson, of Morpeth, writes:—

"I was interested in your mention of the Town Moor (or 'the lungs of the city' as the people of Newcastle call it).

"I am a Freeman of the City and enjoy the privilege—if I desire to exercise it—of grazing two cows upon the Moor."

3. Mr. J. D. M. Tavendale, of Gosforth, writes:—

" 'Humshaugh' let you down rather badly. It is pronounced Humshalf, the 'haugh' coming, I suppose, from the Scottish word 'haugh,' the ground immediately beside the river being fairly level at this point. Another instance of the Scottish 'invasion' as you call it.

"Have you ever noticed how the country folk in the west of Northumberland say 'ye ken,' 'fleyed,' and of course 'canny'?"

4. "You speak of the Tower with the heavy oak doors at the farm on the Wall. Do you not know of the old Pele Towers that stand all along the border, into which the Northumbrian retreated with his family and cattle when the Scots came raiding? Elsdon Rectory is one, Kirkwhelpington Vicarage was, I think built round one. There is one in an

old shop in the village of Cambo, and another at Little Harle Tower near the village of Kirkharle."—M. E. B.

5. I kept on coming to places where Arthur and his Knights were waiting to be roused from sleep, among them Bamburgh, Richmond and Glastonbury; I forget the others.

6. Mr. C. R. Boyle, of Worthing, writes:—

"You did not mention that Stephenson took the chariot gauge at Borcovicus for his railway."

7. Mr. D. C. Robinson, of Eaton Square, writes:—

"I don't think we talk about 'four brace of duck.' Personally one reads a mixed bag as follows: 5 brace Pheasants, 6 brace Partridges, 10 Duck, 5 Pigeon, 25 Rabbits."

8. Mr. Soulsby, of Malton, writes:—

"I only heard part of your talk on Monday, when you said a certain milestone was the only one in existence.

"I just happen to be reading 'The Evolution of an English Town: Pickering, Yorkshire,' by Gordon Home, and on page 60 he says: 'The road (Roman) is discernible in places to Newsham Bridge over the river Rye; not far from which is a milestone of grit yet standing.'

"I have always understood that this particular stone is a Roman milestone.

"It stands about two feet out of and I'm told seven feet under ground. It stands on the road from Newsham to Amotherby."

9. Nothing in all my talks excited so much controversy as my innocent statement that I drank three whiskies to keep out the cold on this journey. Here are samples of suggestions given me, which I hand on to you.

"A packet of humbugs or peppermints."—A Grateful Listener.

"A slab of plain chocolate."—Anonymous.

"A Trench coat with cork between the rubber and the lining next to you... a hot-water-bottle coat... wool-

len helmet . . . newspaper lining."—A. M. R., Tadsworth.

"Ginger wine."—R. H. H., Tonbridge.

"Composition essence."—H. F. J., Bridlington.

"Five or six concentric overcoats."—J. W. F., Biggar.

"Carry a large flask of whisky and pour it down *under* your collar and *over* your spine, instead of pouring it down your throat."—A. P. C., Tunbridge Wells.

"A Thermos flask of hot coffee."—A. H., London.

"A quarter of a pound of *glacè* (not crystallised) stem ginger. Eat a little at intervals."—A. S. H., Birmingham.

"Wise man is he, who, when he sets out on a journey, takes in his hip-pocket one of those handy flasks which Englishmen have forced Scotsmen to carry in self-defence. If ever you get a suit made in Scotland, it will be quite unnecessary for you to instruct the tailor: the suitable pocket is now a matter of sartorial routine."—A. M. P., Coatbridge.

"Hot coffee . . . hot milk . . . or hot tea and cocoa."—E. L., Ilkley.

Mr. (or Mrs.) F. Crompton Bullough, of Bassett, Southampton, sent me a cutting from a newspaper describing a fabric patented by Messrs. Baxter, Woodhouse and Taylor, of Sackville Street, Manchester, worn by Commander Byrd on his Antarctic Expeditions as a protection against the wind.

I immediately bought a "Grenfell" suit (about three guineas, I think) and found it admirable in a high wind. It is very light. I have not tried its capacity to keep out the rain, but it certainly keeps the wind out absolutely.

10. Mr. William Waddell, of Carlisle, writes:—

"I fancy the Mill was located at Otterburn because of the water-power available, and some of the old deeds go to show that a 'Waulk' Mill existed there so long ago as 1707.

"My father as a boy used to be sent to Kendal with horses and carts for dyestuffs before railways existed. This journey took a week to complete."

11. Mr. John W. Forrest, of Biggar, writes:—

"Your reference to the Rectory at Elsdon recalls to me that the church at Bywell (about seven miles down the Tyne from Hexham) has a tower evidently built to serve the same ends. The doorway of this church throws further light on those times; the stones about four feet up are deeply grooved, and those grooves were caused by the lads of the village sharpening their arrowheads while waiting for the services."

12. Mr. Edwin Moore, of Hexham, writes:—

"We were highly amused at your pronunciation of the various places, for instance 'Sewingshields' is pronounced 'Sowingshields,' 'Vindolanda' is 'Vindolana,' 'Craglaugh' is 'Cragloff,' not 'Cragluff.' 'Priestpopple' means the Priest's well, 'Hencotes' the lane of Henga. 'Quatre Bras' needs no comment."

Commander Taprell Dorling, R.N., better known as "Taffrail," writes:—

"I didn't think you made the point that most, if not all, of the 15,000 troops on the Wall were mercenaries—Gauls, Belgians, Spaniards, Rumanians, and the Hamian archers as black as your hat. Also that their wives and families lived in villages behind the Wall fortresses, as at Housesteads. I only wish the village in the rear of the excavated part could also be dug up and properly explored.

"I think it is wonderful to think that these people lived there for nearly three centuries, and that many of the houses were provided with hypocausts.

"But what did the women and children do during the bitter Northumbrian winters to amuse themselves?

"I should add that the regular Roman legions (regulars) were at Deva (Chester) and Eboracum (York). They could be hurried north by the strategic roads if the Picts and Scots came through."

Mr. W. Arthur Hardy, of Norwich, writes:—

"Instead of hearing you three times drank whisky we would rather have heard—(1) Height of Roman Wall; (2) Width; (3) kind of stone or brick.

"Not myself, but I fear some will surmise that you are subsidised by distillers."

Distillers, please note!

An Irritated Listener writes:—

"I am listening to a discourse on the 'Roman Wall' by S. P. B. Mais. Though quite interesting, the whole talk is entirely spoiled by the speaker's snobbish attitude towards the Northumbrian district. He laboriously speaks of 'Newcastle' with the short 'a,' which is quite usual and is generally used in these parts.

"To speak thus is apparently quite alien to his tongue. It is not clever, nor yet funny, and, in my opinion, and that of other listeners, he appears to be patronising and poking fun at our speech. Please do not ask him to discourse on our County again."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 6

1. Mr. A. Parkin, of Apsley End, writes:—

"I was most surprised to hear you describe Dozmare as Cornwall's only lake, as there is one other and that, I believe, southern England's largest, to wit, Looe Pool, near Helston.

"It is fresh water and remarkable for its separation from the sea by a strip of sand of some length."

2. Mr. L. H. L. Saunders, of Welwyn, writes:—

"The young mother who answered your question with four feet, was not far out, as I have waded right through Dozmare Pool. There are one or two holes, however, at the extreme western edge."

3. Miss Frances N. Birch, of Tintagel, writes:—

"I noticed that you wanted to know more about our bogs; there are actually some nasty ones at the foot of Rough Tor, as I know from painful experience (having been hauled out twice, once when I walked into one, and the other time when I rode into it). The worst one is called Crowdy Marsh, and if you had turned north from Rough Tor towards Davidstowe you would have come to that. It is I believe something over a quarter of a mile across, and it never dries up at all; in fact the North Cornwall Water Board draws the entire water supply of the neighbourhood from there (which is very nice when you hear all the tales of horses vanishing from sight and never re-appearing); I have seen hounds crossing the edge of it but riders have to give it a wide berth.

"There is another large and dangerous bog between Rough Tor and Brown Willy which I have been warned about but have not yet become personally acquainted with; when I was up there a fortnight ago I noticed that the smaller ones were much drier than usual, the result of the exceptionally dry winter I suppose."

4. Mr. S. J. Peacock, of London, writes:—

"In your talks on Glastonbury and Tintagel you stated that local legends had it King Arthur was born in both places. But in that of Tintagel you related something concerning Uther Pendragon, his father, which goes far to disprove both folk tales.

"For Uther Pendragon's ancient castle, known as Pendragon's Castle, lying in ruins in Mallerstrang (pronounced Morston) in Westmorland, is where Arthur was undoubtedly born, for it is hardly conceivable that even in those far-off times a lord of the greatness of Uther would permit of his son being born anywhere else than in his own royal castle.

"Hence I take it the local Westmorland legends have more truth behind them than those of Somerset and Cornwall."

5. I should have said that it *ought* to be pronounced "Izzic," for the name means "port of corn," not the "port of a man called Isaac." But visitors persist in making the initial *i* long.

6. Mr. Ralph Rowe, of Wallington, writes:—

"Your pronunciation was Lantiglos, ig as in gig; we say Lanteglos as in egg. I have learnt that the same applied to the parish by Camelford."

Oddly enough I tried to pronounce it Lanteegloss.

7. "But wasn't Mr. Mais guilty of exaggeration when he spoke of the many Cornish choughs he saw wheeling about the cliffs? True, he said he could not see their red feet. For very good reason: they probably were not Cornish choughs at all, for at the present time not more than a few pairs of this bird, nearly extinct as a specie, remain to gratify the heart of the ornithologist; and they are protected by the Bird Watching Society's members."—*Cornish Guardian.*

I am very likely to make mistakes, but my companion, Captain Turton, is an authority whose judgment I should not care to dispute.

8. Mr. G. L. Cleveland, of Bude, writes:—

"When you broadcast your talk about Northern Cornwall in your 'Unknown Island' series, you spoke of the numerous little coves on this coast as a paradise for bathers. I, and I am sure my fellow coroners, would be very gratified if you warned prospective visitors that bathing on the north coast of Cornwall in unfrequented coves is really dangerous, especially at low water or with a receding tide. I am very much afraid that you may have in pure innocence given people an impression that will result in my work being increased and many more drowning fatalities than we usually experience."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 7

1. Mr. Thomas Nettleton, of Oxford, writes:—

"I was very sorry to hear you were not to speak last week, as at first your lectures were so good. The last one was feeble. I do not mind your telling us for the fourth time you were at Oxford; in fact I should like to go further back and hear a description of your parents, and your home, and if you won scholarships to enable you to go to Oxford. Last time, deducting your remarks about the snow and how cold you were, you told us nothing. You casually alluded to some deep blow holes or something puzzling and interesting and then left the subject unexplained. I am conveying my criticism also to the B.B.C."

2. I don't want to mislead you. The Fylde is well worth exploring. It means "the field," and covers a large level plain of long distances broken pleasantly by windmills. It is, of course, low-lying and wind-swept, but its soil is rich and the pasture land excellent. Its capital is Poulton-le-Fylde, the home of the Hesketh family, who intermarried with the other great local family, the Fleetwoods of Rossall.

3. Mr. Sidney B. Depree, of Hove, writes:—

"It may interest you to know that the name Bowland has been said to derive from the fact that the bows used at Agincourt were made of the famous yews which grew in that neighbourhood."

4. Mr. M. Redsdel, of Islington, writes:—

"If you went to Pendle Hill on Good Friday you would find a change; there are Aunt Sallys, etc., and the children for miles around feel they must go there on that day of the year."

5. "On Pendle heights, near Sabden, can be found in Deerstones Quarry, a mass of sandstone rocks. One of the large boulders has two marks side by side, about two feet six inches long and six inches wide, and as they resemble footprints they are said to be those of the Devil himself.

"About a mile away on the crest of the hill nearer to Clitheroe, not far from the 'Well Springs' Inn, is a heap of stones known as the Devil's Apronful. Legend links the two spots as follows: One day 'Old Scat set out towards Clitheroe for the purpose of having a few shies at the old Castle Keep from Pendle. He stepped from Hambledon Hill to Deerstones, where he left the famous footprints, and took his next stride to the top of the hill. The Castle was now in full view and joyfully Old Beelzebub chose a stone, and aimed it right at the Castle Keep. The stone went straight to its mark, and made a terrible hole in the wall which can be seen to this day. But the energy of throwing caused the Devil's apron-strings to break, and all the stones in the apron fell to the ground in a heap, where they have remained ever since."—*Clitheroe Guide.*

6. A correspondent who must have paid me the compliment of listening with particular care takes me to task for my lack of interest in trees. "You rarely ever mentioned trees," he said. "Don't you like them?"

Does the reason for my reticence lie in the fact that all the woods were leafless during the greater part of my tour, or does it lie partly in my ignorance? I still can't tell a lime from a maple.

But it is wrong to suggest that I am not interested in them.

7. "Red Rose" writes:—

"Browsholme is not pronounced as written. Brews'em is correct."

8. Mr. W. J. Titcomb, of Willaston, writes:—

"You seem to have descended Pendle Hill on the side towards Clitheroe. If so you passed over or very near a space known as Swanside. To this is attached a tradition.

"William the Conqueror, of course, claimed all the land of England by right of conquest. Some few estates he donated to the former Saxon owners, the rest to his Norman followers to hold under the feudal system. A large estate in that portion of the Ribble Valley belonged to a Saxon named Sweyn.

"That estate, with other contiguous land, was conferred upon a Norman, I think Hugo de Lacy. By some means Sweyn succeeded in placating the new owner, so that instead of being entirely ruined and reduced to serfdom or to exile he was allowed to retain a portion of his former estate lying between the small stream you crossed and the summit of Pendle Hill. From that time the locality became known as Sweyn's Side, since corrupted into Swanside. I know of no other tradition that brings back so forcibly a picture of the horrors of the conquest."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 8

1. An anonymous correspondent writes:—

"Had you visited Norwich Cemetery you could have added to your very interesting list, Tom Thumb, his wife, and child."

2. Mr. H. B. Martin, of Chertsey, writes:—

"I think you said that last week was the first time you had seen a church with two towers. St. Germans Church, in Cornwall, about nine miles from Plymouth, also has two towers."

3. Miss Ivy Brunton, of Walsingham, writes:—

"The majority of Dereham men are keen bowlers—not only those who frequent the 'King's Head'!"

4. Miss Copland, of Sticklepath, writes:—

"For some years my family occupied the site of Borrow's old home at Oulton Broad. The actual home was pulled down and rebuilt on the same spot, but the garden remains the same. And the old and picturesque summer house where he wrote many of his works—'Lavengro,' I believe, among them —was still intact.

"The villagers knew little of Borrow, but some of them remembered him striding about the lanes, wrapped in a black cloak and thereby frightening some of the small children."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 9

1. I pronounced this word as the natives pronounce it—"Shrowsbury"—and no correspondent took exception to this, but Mr. A. H. Stretch, of Old Trafford, was later roused to protest in a letter to the *Radio Times*:—

"The announcer appeared to me to pronounce 'Shrewsbury' as 'Shrowsbury.' Many people in this town use the same pronunciation: but why? Bredbury, near Stockport, is called Bredbury, as it is spelt. If some of the inhabitants began to call it 'Brodbury' and the idea spread, in good time would it be known as Brodbury and still spelt Bredbury? I have a suspicion that the 'Shrowsburyites' are that kind of individual who try to talk differently to the common herd: 'the black ket set in the white men's het' variety. Let us be honest, and if it must be 'Shrowsbury,' then spell it that way."

As the Saxon town was known as Scrobsbyryg, which became by natural development in the sixteenth century Shrowsburie, how does Mr. Stretch defend his "Shrew"?

2. There is a village near Andover called Abbotts Ann where the same custom still holds, and in the vestry of Matlock Church there are more of these garlands.

3. Mr. G. A. Bryson, of Birmingham, writes:—

"The 'permitted hours' in the various districts have not been officially published since 1922, shortly after the Act of 1921 came into operation; but I find that at that time the Petty Sessional Division of Bishop's Castle was the only district in the whole country in which one o'clock was the end of the morning period, and there may be special reasons for this. There are something over seventy-three thousand 'On Licences' in England, and only nine in the division in question, and you unfortunately struck two of them. Is it quite cricket to speak so strongly on such small ground?"

Mr. J. Smith, of Manchester, who describes himself as a Non-Teetotaller, writes:—

"Sir, re Restrictions, Hours of Opening, I beg to remind you of the pre-war appalling death statistics of the liquor trade employees. For confirmation consult the Insurance Societies!"

4. It is worth while, in this connection, pointing out that the railway between Bishop's Castle and Craven Arms is privately owned. The railway at Marshbrook is on the L.M.S. Rly. and G.W. Rly. systems.

5. Mr. Cecil H. C. Farthing, of King's College, London, writes:—

"May I suggest that you mispronounced 'Clungunford' in Housman's rime?

"I was at this village last summer, and the natives pronounced it with the accent on the second syllable. You accented the first syllable, and thus (if I may say so) missed the true rhythm of the line."

6. Regarding a reprint of this talk in the *Listener*, H. C. S. writes:—

"Surely the Huxleys—Victorian and Georgian—have achieved so much greatness of their own that it is superfluous

to thrust upon them a renown not belonging to their name. But Mr. S. P. B. Mais appears to hold a different opinion. So, in his lyrical tribute to the glory of Shropshire, he writes: 'I passed Brampton Bryan, which Lady Belliana Huxley successfully held with the aid of the family doctor and Sergeant Hackyt against the Royalists.' Here, indeed, is a 'nice derangement' of names, and, in its implied history, a very 'progeny of learning.' Can it be that Mr. Mais is unfamiliar with that classic of the Camden Society publications which preserves the quaint letters of Brilliana, Lady Harley, 'the noble lady' who was the grandmother of Swift's Earl of Oxford? But who would recognise her as 'Lady Belliana Huxley'?

"Nor is Mr. Mais any happier in attributing the defence of Brampton Bryan to Brilliana, Lady Harley and the family doctor and 'Sergeant Hackyt.' Even the family doctor, Nathaniel Wright, was a 'lieutenant-colonel'; while Mr. Mais' 'Sergeant Hackyt' was a Captain John Hakluyt (perhaps a connection of the industrious Richard Hakluyt of the *Principall Navagations*). Nor was that all. The garrison also included two other Captains in the persons of Henry Archibald and Priamus Davies. The latter, too, has left on record the additional facts that Brampton Bryan was 'of considerable strength' and that it was 'manned by about fifty musketeers.' All this gives a vastly different aspect to the heroic spectacle of that valiant trio of Mr. Mais. In view of the enormous audience he addresses, he really must try to get his statements more in harmony with facts."

The B.B.C. typists are always unfortunate in their translation of my handwriting, but I am glad to think that their odd reading of my odd writing should have given H.C.S. a chance to put in a word for his beloved Brilliana, and another for his own happy acquaintance with the Camden Society, who will undoubtedly be flattered thereby.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 10

1. Mrs. Amy E. Wallis, of Darlington, writes:—

"I expect you realised you were treading again in Roman footsteps. You would cross the Roman road, grass-grown but running straight, as you went from Buttersett to Countersett (sett is the Norwegian sæter—summer farm) and they had a camp on Addleborough above Semmer Water (we have stayed on its edge the last two summers with much joy) and a camp at Bainbridge. They worked the mines in Swaledale, and the Rey stone on Stainmoor stands in the middle of their camp there.

"Some day you must see Cauldron Snout and the headwaters winding up into the heather hills with the three mountains above, and also go over from Reeth in Swaledale to Kirby Stephen where there is an almost more startling viewpoint over the Eden valley from the Pennine wall. Also the wild Mallerstang where the Eden and the Ure rise within half a mile of each other—it's a great country! I hope you saw the frescoes of the time of Henry III in Egglestone Church."

Is it Buttersett or Burtersett? Is it Semmerwater or Semerwater? There seems to be a divergence of opinion.

2. Mr. Edward Wilton, of Hull, writes:—

"Wensleydale—not Wenceleydale; or, alternatively, Yoredale. The river is the Yore—Ure on maps only. (York is Yorewick).

"Semerwater is not the only large sheet of water in Yorkshire. I forget whether it is only a little larger or smaller than Hornsea Mere.

"In going from Askrigg to the Buttertubs you do not mention Hardrow Scaur Force—with Aysgarth Force, the two most outstanding natural features in the dale. And I think you cannot have seen the latter or you would not have passed

it over with so little comment. Is High Force really finer? I don't know but scarcely think it is.

"From Middleham it is only two miles to Jervaulx Abbey which ought not to be missed.

"It seems to me that to include Wensleydale and Swaledale in a trip along with the Pennine Moors and Fells is a little incongruous. A Dales tour should start, say, at York, and from thence through Harewood, Ilkley, etc. to the head of Wharfedale. Then over into Nidderdale and down through Pateley to Harrogate and then back via Ripon and Masham to Jervaulx and Middleham, and thence according to your route up Wensleydale and over Buttertubs and down Swaledale to Richmond."

I must have been mixing up Wesley and Wensley, for Mr. Jackson, of Highgate, took me to task for pronouncing Wesley as Wezley. It ought to be Wessley, if he is to be believed.

3. Miss F. Blythe, of Hawes, writes:—

"It seems a pity you did not visit Hardrow Scaur—for you were within a few yards when going to Forsdale—or did you not think it worth the mentioning? Here the river drops a hundred feet.

"The original forest horn is *still* blown at Bainbridge each evening, and is kept at the inn there."

4. Miss Quieta Markwick, of Leamington, writes:—

"Do you not know that all the evidence in the shape of rare and valuable manuscripts still preserved among the national archives, goes to prove that Richard III was a cultured, wise, and noble gentleman who lived long before his time and who was, therefore, not understood by his generation? He was not even really a hunchback, but was slender and rather high shouldered. Unfortunately no eminent historian and biographer lived during his reign, and so when Henry VII came to the throne and encouraged men of letters,

it at once became the fashion to vilify the fallen monarch. All the crimes of Edward IV, out of courtesy to his daughter the reigning queen, were laid wholly to the charge of Richard III, as were all the misdeeds of his brothers, and they were many. True, the two little Princes disappeared during his reign, but there is no *proof* that he had any hand in that; indeed, he was deeply grieved by their death."

5. Mr. E. Hickman, of Chattenden, writes:—

"To-night, when glancing through G. G. Coulton's 'The Mediæval Village,' I came across the following in the appendix 'Marriage and Kinship': 'I have . . . seen . . . index to parish registers of Hawes in Wensleydale, extending from 1695-1747. Under the letter M there are 281 names, of which 271 are Metcalfes; out of the 211 names under D 161 are Dinsdales, and this was under ordinary conditions with no feudal compulsion to marry and the only factor being the remoteness of the parish.' I think, if this is the same place, it is remarkable that two hundred years later the same fact should apply."

6. An anonymous Yorkist writes:—

"From Reeth you say '—and so to Richmond,' I was told, in 1877, that the drive from Richmond to Reeth was acknowledged to be the finest in England, and the second finest was that from Reeth to Richmond!

"But, in my time, it was spoiled by the felling of woods."

7. A young Scots poet writes:—

"On one sentence in your talk last night the whole of the poetic soul of my sixteen years throbbed violently, and I immediately sat down and wrote the following scrap of poetry which I think might interest you. I have italicised the words with which you inspired me."

GREY LADY

A Grey Tower, a Stone Tower
And a *handful of broken, red-roofed cottages*
Nestling like a clump of toadstools,
Round a ragged hill.
There they say the Grey Lady,
In a grey gown, in the grey moonlight,
Moaning out of her hearts' grey sorrow,
Haunts the castle still.

There's no legend to tell her story
And the villagers never speak of her willingly
Only we know she paces silently
On flagged floors chequered with moonlight
Through the vaulted Hall,
In a grey gown, in the grey moonlight,
Slowly she paces out to the battlements
And hangs herself with a grey silk cord
Over the castle wall.

8. Mr. F. J. K. Pentelow, of Barnard Castle, writes:—

"It occurred to me that you had probably not heard the story of these white farms which are all on the estate of Lord Barnard. The version I know is this:—The Lord Barnard of that time was once benighted when hunting, and called at a farm for shelter, which of course was given freely. He was excellently entertained and enjoyed the excellent food and comfortable bed with which he was supplied and on leaving in the morning, thinking of his duties as landlord and also to repay the hospitality he had received, he told the farmer to have any repairs outstanding done and send the bill to his agent. Some two or three months later his agent showed him a bill for over £100 for repairs to the farm buildings. Lord Barnard was somewhat staggered by the amount, but he authorised payment to fulfil his promise.

Then the agent said: 'Of course you know that farm is not on your estate!' So his Lordship, to prevent any more errors of that sort ordered that all farms on his property should be whitewashed, and so they are to this day."

9. Miss Alice L. Griffiths writes:—

"I am afraid you missed the one thing of interest in Barnard (doubtless you came through the place by a different route) and that is the Butter Market, just a queer round building, planted right in the middle of the road and at the top of a horrible, humpty hill which, of course, makes it more in the way in these days of speed. On market-days the farmers' wives and other female belongings sit on either side of the narrow gangway with their open baskets displaying butter, eggs, fowls, etc., and to me it is quite embarrassing to walk round, for one feels as if one were examining the sellers and not the wares, everything is at such close quarters."

Miss Ada M. Williams, of Darlington, writes:—

"I am sorry you didn't notice the old watch-maker's shop in Barnard Castle, because it is to be pulled down very soon, to widen the road. It is just opposite the 'King's Head,' where Dickens stayed."

10. "Nearly one hundred years ago a man died here whom people suspected of being a crook, and it was whispered that he broke into houses and used a Hand; he was, however, never caught and eventually died of old age. The house he lived in was a thatched one and many years later the thatched roof was taken off and replaced by an ordinary tiled one. During this operation the Hand was found by the then owner of the property in the thatch over the room where the old man had died. The existence of the Hand was kept quiet out of consideration for relatives of its original owner, and as there are still descendants living around here I mention no names.

"The Hand was eventually given to a friend of mine and later handed to me. It would appear that in different parts of the country, Hands have been given different powers. Round here I think they were supposed to have the power to keep people asleep, and those who were awake were frozen stiff until the thief got away with his loot, and I think the words used were similar to those mentioned in 'The Ingoldsby Legends.' In the book mentioned a Hand was supposed to have power to cause doors, bars and bolts to fly open on demand."—S. J. B.

11. Mr. G. S. Ralston, of Tunbridge Wells, writes:—

"Knowing that you are fond of hunting I might mention that the pack of beagles you mentioned as meeting in Lunedale are the Tees Valley Beagles, a trencher-fed pack whose headquarters are at Ronald Park in Teesdale. Many a fine day's hare hunting have I had with them in what is probably one of the best countries for the game in England.

"One other thing which may be of interest, knowing your fondness for place-names, I wonder if you noticed at the head of Lunedale a lovely inn called 'The Grains of the Beck' Inn? This is commonly shortened by the natives into 'Grainsy Beck' Inn. The Grains are little feeders which come down thro' the peat off the Lune Forest to feed the parent River Lune."

12. Miss Edith Clark, of Sutton, writes:—

"You said you had been told that some particular view was only exceeded by that of 'Mount Everest from Darjeeling.' Your informant apparently had not been to Darjeeling.' as Mount Everest is not visible from there!

"I wondered if they meant Kanchenjunga, of which you get an absolutely stunning view from Darjeeling."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 11

1. We hear of a similar strategic move at Fishguard during the Napoleonic wars. See page 316.

2. Pronounced Chiddock.

3. Mr. Pogson of Byfleet writes:—

"Mr. Mais thinks that for a nice lonely walk you cannot do better than hike along the Chesil Beach from Burton Bradstock to Portland. I would like Mr. Mais to try doing it were it not that he would be crippled before he got halfway."

4. Mr. G. E. W. Gosnell, of Coulsdon, writes:—

"When you spoke about Dorset you said much of Thomas Hardy and other writers, but not a word about that man of Dorset and master of pure English—the Poet Barnes—who gave us 'Linden Lea'."

I had no time in my talk to do justice to the simple beauty and homely emotion of William Barnes' dialect poems which are much less widely appreciated than they deserve. They are too tender and delicate to bear translation into standard English, so please get someone to read "Linden Lea" (page 176) and the following poem aloud to you in dialect:—

THE WIFE A-LOST

Since I noo mwore do zee your feäce,
Up steärs or down below,
I'll zit me in the lwonesome pleäce,
Where flat-bough'd beech do grow;
Below the beeches' bough, my love,
Where you did never come,
An' I don't look to meet ye now,
As I do look at hwome.

Since you noo mwore be at my zide,
In walks in zummer het,
I'll goo alwone where mists do ride,
Droo trees a-drippèn wet;
Below the beeches' bough, by love,
Where you did never come,
An' I don't grieve to miss ye now,
As I do grieve at hwome.

Since now bezide my dinner-bwoard
Your vaïce do never sound,
I'll eat the bit I can avword
A-villd upon the ground;
Below the darksome bough, my love,
Where you did never dine,
An' I don't grieve to miss ye now,
As I at hwome do pine.

Since I do miss your vaïce an' feäce
In prayer at eventide,
I'll pray wi' woone sad vaïce vor greäce
To goo where you do bide;
Above the tree an' bough, my love,
Where you be gone avore,
An' be a-waïtèn vor me now,
To come for evermwore.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 12

1. Miss Victoria Robertson-Brown, of Glasgow, writes:—
"I suppose you know that it was the bridge that you stood on that Tam O'Shanter galloped across and the witches pulled the tail off his mare."

2. "O the flummery of a birthplace!
Cant! Cant! Cant!"

3. Mr. E. Hamilton Cramb, of Dalmuir, writes:—

"Had you come by road from Dalmellington to Ayr you would have passed Waterside, a little village on the river. You would have been struck by seeing numbers of men lying in rafts on the river peering into the water through empty biscuit-tin boxes with glass bottoms, armed with a slender stick in one hand. They are the pearl-fishers, and innumerable pearls are got from the river every year now the freshwater mussels have grown again, and the miners have found a new occupation—pearl fishery. And very beautiful these freshwater mussel pearls are, with an elusive pinkish shade. I possess a specimen the size of a large pea, given me by the Patna village policeman's son as a souvenir for removing a '22 bullet from his hand when he accidentally shot it in 1902. It now adorns the finger of my wife, set up as a ring, and very beautiful it looks."

4. Mr. W. Harry Clegg, of Huddersfield, writes:—

"Regarding Loch Doon. You didn't mention the amount we are paying in income-tax through the war-time folly there, when they were wasting millions a year trying to make an aerodrome and seaplane base. Any local could have told them the bogs were, as they say, bottomless, and yet they tried to erect on them. They wanted George Stephenson, of Chat Moss fame, to help them. You have been over those moors, so can appreciate their difficulties as well as cost of taking material out there."

5. Dr. Cumming, of Hove, writes:—

"Next time you come back from Galloway you must not speak of the curlew. Say that you heard the 'whaup'."

6. Mr. I. H. K. Beattie, of Lockerbie, writes:—

"May I presume to state that the local belief is that Robert Bruce was born in 1274 in Lochmaben Castle, where there is an attractive statue erected to his memory."

7. Mr. George Penman, of Dalry, writes:—

"The hill Mullwharchar you mentioned has a peculiar history; it means the hill of the Hunting Horn. Long ago all the country in the Cauldron was forest, and wild boars and wolves were plentiful. Lord Kennedy was ranger of the forest, and when he wanted to hunt he sent one of his men to the top of Mullwharchar; from there he sounded a horn, and those who wished to hunt on hearing the horn met at a certain place arranged before. Hence the name, the 'Hill of the Hunting Horn.' You mentioned the Merrick, which means 'hand'; it is from the gaelic word Murack. The reason of the name is this: at sunset if you were standing on the top of Craignaw, which is the hill on the other side of the silver flow of Buchan when looking across the valley from Millfire, the formation of the hills surrounding the Merrick casts a shadow of a great hand in the valley below."

8. Mr. E. Richmond Paton, of Hareshawmuir, writes:—

"Now were they eagles, or could they have been buzzards? Pardon my asking, as they could be golden eagles: there were a pair there a few years ago. And they might be buzzards. The large grey feathers, I suggest, would be from a bean goose rather than a heron."

9. Mr. George Penman, of Dalry, again writes:—

"You said you got a glimpse of two eagles from the top of Millfire; you must have taken the buzzard hawk for the eagle. The last eagle disappeared from Galloway along with the mountain partridge in the year 1826. Regarding the incident between the eagle and the otter at Loch Dungeon, Rev. J. H. Dick did not witness it; it was two anglers who told the story. If you look up 'Highways and Byways of Galloway' you will see what he writes."

10. Mr. A. J. Merson, of Maybole, writes:—

"May I be permitted to give you the pronunciation of three names of which I think you were not sure:—

Souter pronounced Sooter (Scots for shoemaker)
Crossraguel pronounced Cross-ray-gil (g hard)
Cassillis pronounced Cass-ills (two syllables).

"It is a pity you had not time to visit Crossraguel Abbey, which is a fine example of a Cluniac monastery, and shows one of the most interesting and complete examples of monastic sanitation remaining to-day. It is also interesting to know that this monastery had the rare right of minting coins. Culzean Castle (pronounced cul-ane) is a beautiful place which you would see perched on its high eminence and embowered in trees just shortly after you passed Dunure Castle. Then you passed over the unexplained 'Electric Brae'—scientific phenomenon. If you stop your car on it, the car runs upwards, seemingly against all the natural laws. The Dule Tree on which Johnnie Faa was hanged is still shown at Cassillis House, and the Countess's room is still shown in Maybole Castle, which she is supposed to haunt, though there is no record or story that she was ever actually seen."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 13

1. Mr. B. Llewellyn, of Aberdare, writes:—

"In your last talk you mentioned a tree called Y Wern which you said you did not know by an English name except that of lambs' tails. The proper Welsh name is Gwernen. This tree is rather common, thriving in damp situations. The timber is used by clog-makers. It is the alder tree (*Alnus glutinosa*)."

Miss Edith Bogie, of Manchester, writes:—

"As a matter of fact, I believe the name 'Wern' translated into English means 'farm,' but I am not just dead certain

of this fact. Anyhow, it was a farm at that time. I remember there was a family strutting round the place of peacock, peahen and three chicks. One is not often fortunate enough to see them.

"The point I really wish to stress, however, is that we missed any mention in your talk about the ceiling in this house in the form of the Union Jack, and we wonder whether this was pointed out to you. Of course, the effect was rather spoiled, as the ceiling in question was whitewashed, although the formation was easily discernible. Still, it did seem to be a pity that the old oak beams had not been left alone in their original state, as one could just imagine how fine the ceiling would then have looked with this formation of the old flag."

2. The French surrendered without firing a shot. They mistook numbers of Welsh women (who were dressed in beaver hats and red cloaks and kept purposely on the move like a pantomime chorus) for Grenadiers. Compare this ruse with that adopted by Blake at Lyme Regis (page 164).

3. Correspondents keep on reminding me that lichen is pronounced "lyken" by botanists, and all the correct people, but I have always called it "litchen," and "litchen" it remains —for me.

I always pronounce misled as "mizzled," a more picturesque sound, and one far more suited to its meaning than "miss-led."

In spite of the laudable attempt of the B.B.C. to standardize our pronunciation, it is good, I think, to keep a few words in a state of flux. Cirencester hasn't quite settled down yet, nor has Stiffkey. And how do you pronounce Hoxne, anyway? And what about beret?

4. Miss Dorothy Gwenbrid Rees, of Llandowror, writes:

"This part of Wales has its traditions of King Arthur too, and though we are very far from Camelot in Somerset,

yet I am sure the knights sometimes ride westward to reach Merlin's town, Caer-marthen, where Merlin lies imprisoned under one of the hills that surround the town, and where his oak still stands in Priory Street, protected by an iron railing because the legend says that when the tree falls, the town will fall. I know, too, they sometimes ride still further west along what is known locally as the 'Roman road' that runs past our garden gate and through the village here."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 14

1. Miss M. I. Marriott, of Ryde, writes:—

"In your talk last night you said that you had been searching for years for the peregrine falcon. This bird is to be found nesting in the Culver Cliffs (between Sandown Bay and Whitecliffe Bay, I. of W.). It has been seen at this spot for years, how many I cannot say, but the I. of W. Natural History and Archælogical Society can give all information. Because of this fact the peregrine has been chosen as the emblem which represents the S.E. Division of the I. of W. Girl Guides, and has been incorporated in our County Standard."

Miss Joan A. Melvill Green, of North Poulner, writes:—

"I am sorry you have been so unsuccessful in your search for peregrines. It may interest you to know that they are to be found in the north-west part of the New Forest. Some two years ago I came across one, about four or five miles from here, that had just killed a stock-dove, and I was able to stand and watch it devouring at a distance of about twenty yards; an unpleasant though interesting sight."

Mr. F. Spurr, of Hove, writes:—

"I may mention, as possibly of interest to you, that some four or five years ago I saw a pair of peregrines on the Sussex coast between Birling Gap and Cuckmere Haven.

The coastguard told me that before the War he often saw ten or twelve pairs in the locality, but that since the War they were fewer, but usually were to be seen here."

2. Mrs. Mary C. Burton, of High Wycombe, writes:—

"You wondered on Monday evening if there were another place where ducks swim on sea-water. Well, just west of Port Isaac is Port Quin, a deserted fishing village. Here a few years ago I saw a regiment of ducks waddle down the hill, in single file, of course, and take to the sea, as though it were a pond. I saw no sea-gulls at Port Quin."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 15

1. Mr. M. G. Ling, of Taynton, writes:—

"By an Order of Parliament dated Monday, 17 Jan., 1647–48, Taynton Church was rebuilt between the dates you mentioned to-night, 1648–52, and we always understood here that this was unique, but evidently it isn't after what you said and you may receive other letters telling you of other cases of this sort. I should add that the old church was burned down in 1643 by the Royalists under Captain Wiffin after the siege of Gloucester. The new church was built on another piece of glebe."

Mr. I. Gill, of Melton Mowbray, writes:—

"In this county I have more than once visited a Commonwealth Church at Staunton Harold, built in 1653 in the style of the fifteenth century, i.e. perpendicular. The following inscription appears over the west door: 'In the year 1653 when all things sacred were throughout the nation Either demolished or profaned, Sir Robert Shirley, Baronet, Founded this Church; Whose singular praise it is, to have done the best things in the worst times, And Hoped them in the most calamitous.' This Sir Robert Shirley died in the Tower at 28 years old."

2. Mr. Martin Homes, of Bosbury, writes:—

"I noticed in the course of your remarks to-night, that you said you came in contact with a farmer wearing a bowler hat, and with highly polished black boots. Did this seem in any way remarkable to you? The agricultural outlook may be in a rotten state, but even if we are poor, we can black our boots; I take it yours had been cleaned before you went out. I do not want you to think I am in any way annoyed with your remarks, but you will admit it gives many people the idea that farmers do never turn out smartly."

3. Miss Adelaide E. M. Payne, of St. Leonards-on-Sea, writes:—

"I wonder whether you know of the interesting little ceremony which takes place every evening, in the summer at least, at Yetholm. A lad blows a horn on the green at Church Yetholm, whereupon all the cattle from all the grazing land round the town saunter home unattended. They each know their own farms and byres and walk straight into them!"

4. Miss Muriel C. Lindsay, of Gosforth, writes:—

"Last August I spent five blissful days on the Island. It is a most fascinating spot, especially the Priory, but the most enthralling part was hunting for St. Cuthbert's beads, just opposite St. Cuthbert's Island, a tiny little one on the north side. These are supposed to be made by St. Cuthbert, and the possession of them is said to keep you from all harm. Some are very large, others tiny, and so thin you can pierce them and make them into necklaces, which I have done. They are really the vertebrae of some prehistoric fish, and are very quaint as the enclosed specimen will show you."

Miss Nellie Crichton, of Glasgow, writes:—

"I was much interested to find some plants of henbane on the island."

5. Mr. O. Fletcher, of Harrogate, writes:—

"Last night you were speculating as to whether there were any survivors left of the Romany family of Faa. Not in Northumberland. I believe the Royal family, in the North anyway, petered out with the son of Queen Hester, who herself died at Kirk Yetholm, near Cornhill, *cis* Tweed. Dr. Thomas Hodgkin once resided at Barmoor Castle as tenant. I remember once his showing me a contemporary Knight Roll of English Knights who had won their spurs. Queerly enough no Percies or Greys. They were presumably busily engaged in France. And Surrey raked up a scratch team—good enough for the occasion.

"A collateral branch of the gipsy family of Faa may at this time be found at Abergavenny, still poaching, still pinching, still catching mowdies, as in the good old days.

"Here is a perfectly true story of Queen Hester. It must have happened about seventy years ago. An old Tweedside friend of mine was as a boy a clerk at Cornhill Station. Came to the station one morning (not in State save in a mucky state) the Queen herself, in charge of two scions of the Blood Royal, a boy and a girl. She wanted them delivered at a Romany camp, which used to exist before the passing of the Vagrants Act at Heaton just outside Newcastle. They couldn't speak English, only Romany. What about it? They had to change at Tweedmouth, and possibly at Newcastle as well. Seizing the situation as Napoleon himself might have done the boy Watson (by the way, he went to live at Yetholm on retirement) put a wagon-label, addressed, on the two Royalties, and put them in the care of the guard. 'Take care of the lad,' says the Queen, 'it doesn't matter so much aboot t' other.' "

Mr. G. Sommerville McKellar, of Kelso, writes:—

"Yetholm is a very fascinating place, and the Yetholm gipsies stand alone. I believe there is very little literature

published about Yetholm and the gipsies, but two very interesting books were published here last century:

'The Yetholm History of the Gypsies.' Joseph Lucas, 1882;

'The Gypsies of Yetholm.' William Brocke, 1884;

both published by J. & J. H. Rutherford, Kelso."

Miss M. E. Pattinson, of Uxbridge, writes:—

"It may interest you to know that the old Gipsy Queen, Esther Faa, occasionally visited my mother, who was then living her early married life near Flodden. As usual, when so honoured by Gipsy Royalty, tribute was demanded, given, and also taken! My mother always expected to miss some little thing from the kitchen, and was more amused than annoyed when her expectation was verified. Another incident in the quiet country life of the later 1860's was the regular visit of a fishwife from the Holy Island fisheries, carrying her creel on her back, suspended by a broad band round her forehead."

Miss Iris Ritson, of Kirk Yetholm, writes:—

"The first mention of gipsies in Yetholm is 1449 and 1460. An entry in the books of the Lord High Treasurer, 22nd April, 1505, runs—'Item, to the Egyptians be the King's Command—vi. j. lib.,' and on July 5th, 1505, James IV gave Anthonius Gagino, Count of Little Egypt, a letter of commendation to the King of Denmark. In 1540, James V subscribed to a writ in favour of 'Oure louit Johnne Faw, Lord of Erle of Littal Egipt.' Some historians mention that the gipsies did not settle at Kirk Yetholm until 1669. That mistake may be accounted for owing to the heads of the gipsies being called King and Queen after that date.

"They have a language of their own which they are chary of speaking. Nearly all are wandering dealers, and except during winter, they move in single families. In 1817, the

tribe numbered 109. Will Faa Blyth, the first gipsy King we hear of, died in 1783 or 1784. His son (William) succeeded him. Esther (his sister) succeeded William in 1847. Her son Charles Blyth became King in 1861, and was succeeded by his daughter, Esther Faa Blyth (Queen Esther), who died in July, 1883. She described Kirk Yetholm as "Sae mingle mangle that ane micht think it was built on a windy nicht, or "sawn" on a windy day. The Inhabitants, maistly Irish and nane o' her seed, breed and generation.' She was quite correct, for, owing to so much inter-marrying outside the tribe, then and to-day there are no 'true gipsies.' The inhabitants of Kirk Yetholm are very swarthy, with black hair and beady black eyes. Very clannish and born poachers. The 'Palace' may still be seen, but it is very disappointing, just an ordinary cottage with a porch and latticed window. The dates are, as far as I know, correct. This list of words are not all pure gipsy, but are all used by the inhabitants. Those which are pure gipsy words are marked G.

(G)	Gliff	*frightens*
	Pit-mirk	*dark as the pit*
	Row-pit	*sold up*
	Doer	*agent*
	Gliff (Scotch)	*look*
	Tod	*fox*
	Swen	*unwilling*
	Sough	*report*
	Begowk	*befool*
(G)	Ranking	*enjoying*
	Hard-up	*ill* (local term)
	Tenty	*careful*
	Poke	*bag*
	Pig	*hot water bottle*
	Wyte	*blame*
	Cyte	*mad*

	Rage	*mad* (gipsy pronunciation *radge*)
	Trokings	*dealings*
(G)	Hank	*tangle*
(G)	Ben	*go*
	Ben (Scotch)	*kitchen*
	Coggie	*wooden dish*
(G)	Drouth	*thirst*
(G)	Manishee	*woman*
(G)	Pani	*water*
(G)	Gadgie	*man*
(G)	Meuri	*money*
(G)	Charry	*baby*
(G)	Jigger	*door*
(G)	Choring	*stealing*
(G)	Jugle	*dog*
(G)	Fecking	*stealing*
(G)	Backery	*sheep*
(G)	Parkis / Swishy	*Share*
(G)	Gry	*horse*
(G)	Screeb	*cart*
(G)	Peering	*boozing*
(G)	Keir	*house*
(G)	Rachie	*parson* (pronounced *rashy*)
(G)	Yag	*coal*
(G)	Bary glim	*good fire*
(G)	Casties	*sticks.*

"I cannot vouch for correct spelling. I have written as pronounced."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 16

1. Why do Englishmen nearly always pronounce this Culludden? All Scotsmen call it Cullōden.

2. Mr. A. F. Moir, of Aberdeen, writes:—

"I hope you will excuse a small correction. You spoke of Tomnahurich (spelled correctly, it is Tom-na-h-Iubharaich) as being the 'Hill of the Fairies,' and I understand this translation has actually got into a guide book. The word, however, has nothing to do with fairies, and means 'yew trees.' If you climbed this hill, you would see for yourself that its name is justified, and that the name of the Hill of the Yew Trees is thoroughly deserved."

3. Mr. A. F. Moir, of Aberdeen, writes:—

"The name of your dog, as it sounded over the wireless, was brochar, and you gave the English meaning as hunter. Brocair, which sounds Broch Kar in English (accent on broch) means really a fox hunter, a vermin exterminator. Foxes are still, of course, considered vermin with us. The Gaelic word for a hunter is Sealgair (pronounced Sheel-a-car), but, at the same time, it is quite possible that brocair is a localism in Glen Affric."

4. Mr. E. T. Massey, of Foxdale (Isle of Man), writes:—

"I wonder if the big black birds were 'grey backs' as they call them here—they go croaking over us very often and always in pairs. They do a lot of damage to chicks and even lambs."

Mr. J. P. Barron, of Aberdeen, writes:—

"The birds you are in doubt about are carrion crows, or as they are called in Aberdeenshire 'heedy crows.' They are very destructive amongst chickens, especially young turkeys, for they seem to be a special delicacy for them."

A rather less observant ornithologist suggests that:—

"The large dusty coloured bird you encountered in Strath Glass is a buzzard. I've spent several holidays in the Strath and got great pleasure in watching the habits of these beautiful creatures."

5. Mrs. S. M. Shepherd, of Streatham, writes:—

"Maybe the following will interest you *re* your mention of Prince Charlie. There is living at Annan, Dumfriesshire, the senior Colonel of the Royal Scots, who is well over ninety years old. He, as a wee boy, met at Fontainebleau an old French lady who had seen Prince Charlie in 1746."

NOTES FOR CHAPTER 17

1. The Rev. J. E. N. Jackson, of Normanby, writes:—

" 'Galtres' is pronounced locally 'Gall-trees' and means, so I understand, Gallow-trees! The fine wooden pillars in the Guild Hall at York were cut from this forest of Galtres and show what magnificent trees the ancient forest produced."

2. Mr. M. G. Ling, of Taynton, writes:—

"Purely as a matter of accuracy, it may have been plum, pear, damson or cherry blossom in the Dean's garden at York, but surely not apple blossom yet. They will not be open even here for another fortnight; this is one of the latest springs on record in relation to apple blossom."

3. Mr. I. G. Moore, of Oundle, writes:—

"You said that Laurence Sterne wrote 'Tristram Shandy' while living at Sutton on the Forest, but actually he lived at Coxwold, a village near Thirsk, where his house can still be seen at the Thirsk end of the village."

A number of correspondents sought to correct me on this point. The truth is that part of "Tristram Shandy" was written at Sutton and part at Coxwold.

4. Miss Apps, of Nawton, reminds me that the full inscription round the sun-dial over the south door of St. Gregory's Church, Kirkdale, runs thus:

"Orm the son of Gamel bought St. Gregory's Minster when it was all broken and fallen, and he it let make anew

from the ground to Christ and St. Gregory, in Edward's days King and Tostig's days Earl."

5. An anonymous correspondent from the North Riding writes:—

"Robin Hood's Bay is said to have once been called 'Robbers' Hole Bay!' "

A Harrow listener writes:—

"It may perhaps interest you to know that when you walked along the cliffs from Whitby to Robin Hood's Bay and looked down on the black rocks, you passed the spot where the hospital ship 'Rohilla' was wrecked in the early days of the War with the loss of a great number of lives, the life-boatmen fighting the sea for over two days to rescue the remaining of those on board, which was finally accomplished by a motor lifeboat sent down from Tynemouth.

"With reference to your remark that no vehicle could possibly get down the road to Robin Hood's Bay, may the writer be excused for telling you that a heavy lifeboat on her carriage was hauled during a snowstorm by numbers of horses and men from Whitby down that steep incline to the bay, finally rescuing lives from a distressed vessel. This was many years ago when roads were not what they are to-day.

"Two epics of a wonderful race of longshoremen now, alas, fast disappearing."

Mr. W. E. Honeybone, of Ossett, writes:

"You were wrong when you said that no motor could get down the hill into the Bay. It is true that most of the tradesmen deliver their goods on horseback, but I have seen motors go both down and up the hill to deliver goods. It takes some doing, but it can be done."

6. Mr. Vernon Spreadbury, of Muswell Hill, writes:—

"You mentioned the 'Pricke of Conscience' window in All Saints' Church, North Street, York, and gave the date

of this work as of the fourteenth century. Forgive me writing to correct you, but the date should be that of the fifteenth century. Personally, I place the window in the first half of the fifteenth century.

"No authority that I know has ever dated the window as belonging to the fourteenth century, although the poem that inspired the work was written by Richard Rolle of Hampole early in the fourteenth century."

My authority was Mr. Joseph E. Morris, who in Methuen's "Little Red Guide to York" (p. 81) places it as mid-fourteenth century.

7. Mr. Harold F. Teesdale, of Horsforth, writes:—

"It is All Saints' (not All Souls') Church, in the pavement, which has the lantern tower which once guided travellers through the forest of Galtres. We called it "Gall-trees,' by the way, at school, and I have never heard the French pronunciation which you give it. You may be right, of course, but with me 'Gall-trees' has always been a *sine qua non.*"

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